UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA

PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM LETRAS/INGLÊS E LITERATURA CORRESPONDENTE

COUNTER STRIKE CALLS TO PLAY
A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THE GAME COVER.

CECILIA AMANDA WILLI DE SOUZA

Dissertação submetida à Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina em cumprimento parcial dos requisitos para obtenção do grau de

MESTRE EM LETRAS

FLORIANÓPOLIS

Dezembro/2010

Esta Dissertação de Cecília Amanda Willi de Souza, intitulada Counter Strike Calls to Play. A Multimodal Analysis of the Game Cover, foi julgada adequada e aprovada em sua forma final pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras/Inglês e Literatura Correspondente, da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, para fins de obtenção do grau de

MESTRE EM LETRAS

Área de concentração: Inglês e Literatura Correspondente
Opção: Língua Inglesa e Linguística Aplicada

_____
Glória Gil
Coordenadora

BANCA EXAMINADORA:

_____
Viviane Maria Heberle
Orientadora e Presidente

_____
Francisco A. Pereira Fialho
Examinador

_____
Marcos A. Morgado de Oliveira
Examinador

Florianópolis, 21 de dezembro de 2010.

To Ana Cecilia, João Paulo, Luciene,
And Welson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I will sincerely thank all my family and friends who, in different ways, have contributed to accomplish this work.

My grateful acknowledgement to

God, for being my mighty fortress;

CAPES, for providing me with the scholarship to pursue my studies;

My advisor, Dr. Viviane Heberle, for accepting the challenge of working with video games, and for providing me with multimodal tools to develop myself professionally;

Sidnéa Nunes Ferreira, for sharing her knowledge and friendship; my PGI colleagues, and especially to Giana Steffen and Kátia Muck for our fruitful academic and friendly conversations.

Horacio E. Veronesi, for his technical support and logical thinking.

In memoriam, to my friend Prof. Wanda A.R.Fortes and to Dr. J.L.Meurer, for their inspiring spirits as docents and researchers.

ABSTRACT

COUNTER STRIKE CALLS TO PLAY
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2010

Supervising Professor: Viviane Maria Heberle

Video games, the contemporary mass entertainment phenomenon are objects of study and application in diverse areas. In Education, teachers increasingly engage to this social practice not only as means of entertainment but also as a way of helping users to interact with information technology (Aaerseth, 1997; Lemke, 2002) and as a potential device for critical thinking (Frasca, 2001). In Brazil, the use of VGs applied to education is still a new and restricted practice. Yet, the rich semiotic content and the generalized familiarity of student players with the medium make VGs a relevant potential source to multiliteracies (Unsworth, 2007, 2001; Christie, 2005; Gee, 2005; Jenkins & Squire, 2003). This situation raises questions regarding the semiotic representations in VGs and the adequate applications in multiliteracies and language learning. This research aims to understand and to interpret the multimodal representation of discourse of war as entertainment in the cover of the first person shooter Counter Strike 1.6. Based mainly on Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), Unsworth (2001; 2006) and Machin and van Leeuwen (2009), this study unveils that 1) The purpose of the cover seems to influence the choices made for the abstraction of explicit representations of war and the privilege of the glamorized representation of the U.S. counter terrorist force who resembles a Hollywoodian male war hero; 2) Compositional, Interactive and Representational meaning functions (VGD) interplay meanings across modes and co work to blur boundaries between serious life and gamic reality; 3)Sound contextualizes the game in its genre and in the localization of the settings in the game maps; 4) Typeface used to facilitate redability under pressure of quick action may reflect reading changing tendencies in the computer era. I conclude that even controversial values reflected in the materiality of the image – e.g.

praised value to the use of lethal weapons- attributed to represented participants in visual texts could promote material to critical learning, class discussion and multimodal and interdisciplinary activities in class environments with diverse media resources.

Number of pages: 110 (excluding appendices)
Number of pages: 122 (including appendices)
Number of words: 27.778

RESUMO

COUNTER STRIKE CHAMA: A JOGAR!
UMA ANÁLISE MULTIMODAL DA CAPA DO VÍDEO JOGO

CECILIA AMANDA WILLI DE SOUZA

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA
2010

Professora Orientadora: Viviane Maria Heberle

Vídeo jogos, considerados um fenômeno de entretenimento de massa contemporâneo, vem sendo estudados e utilizados nas mais diversas áreas. Na Educação, cada vez mais docentes se aderem a esta prática como um meio de interação com as tecnologias de informação (Aarseth, 1997, Lemke, 2002) e os utilizam como uma ferramenta potencial para promover pensamento crítico (Frasca, 2001). No Brasil, o uso de vídeo jogos na Educação é ainda uma prática nova e restrita. Contudo, o rico conteúdo semiótico destes jogos e a familiaridade generalizada dos estudantes com este meio fazem com que sejam incluídos entre as fontes de material para o multiletramento ((Unsworth, 2007, 2001; Christie, 2005; Gee, 2005; Jenkins & Squire, 2003). Esta situação levanta questões referentes às representações semióticas dos vídeo jogos, como assim também, à criação de aplicativos adequados ao multiletramento. Esta pesquisa tem por objetivo compreender e interpretar a representação multimodal do discurso de guerra como entretenimento, na capa do jogo de tiro Counter Strike 1.6. O estudo, baseado principalmente nos trabalhos de Kress e van Leeuwen (1996), Unsworth (2001; 2006) e Machin e van Leeuwen (2009), revela que: 1) o propósito (a função) da capa sugere ter influenciado nas escolhas feitas para a composição da mesma. ((Nela se dá ênfase à representação glamurizada do soldado da força antiterrorista e são abstraídas possíveis representações explicitas de guerra); 2) as funções Representacional, Interativa e Composicional (GDV) se articulam através dos modos de representação e realizam o trabalho conjunto de tentar fundir, visualmente falando, as fronteiras entre a guerra na realidade da vida e na realidade do jogo; 3) efeitos de áudio e som contextualizam o gênero do jogo como assim também, a espacialização dos ambientes criados em mapas locais; 4) o tipo de letra escolhido para facilitar a compreensão de

textos enquanto se joga sob pressão de tempo, pode espelhar uma mudança nos hábitos de leitura na era da computação. Concluo o presente trabalho refletindo sobre o uso de vídeo jogos, mesmo quando o tema é controvertido, sugerindo possíveis atividades que incluam vídeo jogos como material para letramento multimodal.

Número de páginas: 110 (excluindo apêndices)
Número de páginas: 122 (incluindo apêndices)
Número de palavras: 27778

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GLOSSARY

Add-ons: tools that work at the at the hardware or a software improving some features of the game.
Bots: when playing the single mode and the gamer plays with the computer, the bots are the computer guided substitutes that represent gamers in the rounds.
First-Person Shooter (FPS): A game in which players control individual characters, viewing the world as if through the character's eye (first person). In FPS, gameplay centers on shooting things (e.g., Counter-Strike)
LAN: stands for local area network. (LAN play, LAN houses and LAN parties are related to this play mode)
Machinima: online videos and movies made using the same tools as for modes, but they are created just to be watched. (e.g. CS for Kids by Xanatos which can be accessed at www.machinima.com)
Massively Multiplayer Online (MMO) Game: A game, played exclusively online, in which hundreds or thousands of players exist simultaneously in the same game world. Example: World of War craft.
Mods: modifications of a source game. They are created to be played and involve questions of ethics and electronic piracy if distributed freely in closed source systems and private leisure regulation.
Realism: aesthetic reconstruction of social realism In fictional worlds (Galloway, 2006)
Realism (Galloway, 2006): aesthetic reconstruction of social realism in fictional worlds. For Schleiner (…) realism has to do with the reproduction of characters and game play environments closer to 'reality' and farther from fantasy.
Realisticness (Galloway, 2006): representation of the real life at the visual level.
Skins: refers on possible changes how is the player's character is visualized on the screen (e.g. on the color of its hair, its size, the cloths it is wearing, etc.).
Solo: refers to the 'one player' play experience with and against 'bots' (digital players and counter players)
Wad: source code modifications creating editors for making custom levels for example

Reference for this glossary

http://gamesforchange.org/toolkitflash/Media/PDF/Glossary.pdf

LIST OF ABREVIATIONS

CS1.6 .....Counter Strike 1.6
Bot……..robot
CDA .....……. ..... Critical Discourse Analysis
F.P.S. .....…….…..First Person Shooter
G.V.D.....Grammar of Visual Design
NUPDiscurso .....Núcleo de Pesquisa, Texto, Discurso e Práticas Sociais
PCNs …….....……...Parâmetros Curriculares
PPGI .....Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês
UFSC...…….....……...Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina
VG ..... Video Game

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context of investigation

Video games (VGs) are largely played in Brazil among children, teenagers and young adults, many of whom have grown up within the videogame culture. Besides, the popularization of computers, the use of Internet and the increasing number of LAN houses make VGs accessible to gamers of different social strata in this country. The tremendous success of this entertainment is in part owed to pervasive features in VGs, and game designers face the challenge of improving games' technical resources to fulfill the expectations of consumers of these games. A point that designs the context of investigation for this work is that most players learn the architecture of the game (they learn how to play) and even when they cannot read English, they manage to play proactively. In other words: using creative skills (Pierce, 2005), they show to be active members in game communities and blogs, consume discourses within the games, and in doing so they naturalize violence and reinforce aggressive (Anderson, Gentile & Buckley, 2007) identities and styles when war craft is the theme of the game.

Researchers have come to consider VGs not only a mass entertainment phenomenon, but a tool to promote analytical and strategic skills (Gee, 2005) and critical thought (Frasca, 2004), as well as a way of helping players to interact with information technology (Aarseth, 1997; Unsworth, 2001,2007; Lemke, 2002) and literacy (Unsworth, Thomas & Bush, 2004; Gee, 2003, 2004, 2007).

This situation raises questions related to the understanding of multimodal semiotic representations in VGs and relates them to multiliteracies and language learning. Games, players and their ergodic[1] (Aarseth, 2003) relationship have come to be subject of study of Human Sciences' researchers specially with the popularity of computers. In the landscape of Education, students and teachers increasingly engage in

[1] The notion of ergodic from Aarseth (1997) is equivalent to the term interactive but it refers to readers, players, texts and games, and the 'nontrivial effort required for the reader to traverse the text'; the ergodic element in texts can be noticed for instance, when players process information and take decisions that modify the narrative of the text by clicking a mouse in counter part to the act of reading linearly by following the sequence of the pages.

this social practice not only as means of entertainment but also as source to multi mediated literacies (Nelosn,2006; Christie, 2005; Gee, 2005; Jenkins & Squire, 2003), and as a potential device for critical thinking (Frasca, 2001). In Brazil, the use of VGs applied to education is still a new and restricted practice.

As an Applied Linguistics student of the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês (PPGI) and a researcher of the Núcleo de Pesquisa, Texto, Discurso e Práticas Sociais (NUPDiscurso)[2] at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), I investigate the multimodal discursive representation in the cover of the popular and controversial VG Counter Strike (CS 1.6) and reflect about possible applications of VGs in critical learning.

The assumption underlying this work is the conviction in the effectiveness of drawing students' experiences from their everyday life and outside official schooling (Fairclough, 1999) as a beginning to raise critical language awareness and a path to meaningful (second) language learning.

1.1.1. Presenting the game

CS 1.6., created by computer science student Minh Gooseman Le and Jeff Cliffe, is a first person shooter (F.P.S.) initially created as a modification (or a mod) of the video game Half Life. It was initially released as a free software, and based upon CS 1.6 success Sierra Entertainment/ Vivendi Universal Games first published CS 1.6 in 1999 as a separate section of Half Life game. After the release of nineteen improved Beta versions[3] CS1.6 mod (running from June, 1999 to November 2000) the Valve distribution announced to have 'teamed up' (Steam, 2008) with CS's developers.

This game can be played either as single player game, *in solo*[4], or as multiplayer game for LAN and internet play experience where it can

[2]NUPDiscurso participants research in the areas of Critical Discourse Analysis, Semantics/ Pragmatics, Genre Theory, Gender Studies, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Multimodality, Corpus Linguistics, and Language Teaching.

[3]Beta version: an experimental or pre-release version of new software often made available over the Internet as freeware For a shortcut to information on the history and modifications of CS versions, please go to Annex1, and for more detailed explanation go to http://csnation.totalgamingnetwork.com/articles.php/1/2/

[4] In solo, CS is played with the help of bots or robot army dolls that function as players.

be operated by two or more players. In official tournaments[5] CS is played by 2 opponent teams of 5 players each, and in 30 rounds of 1minute 45 seconds: gamers have to play Terrorist (stipulated as offensive play) and Counter Terrorist (stipulated as defensive play). In doing so they change weapons and gaming strategies; the first team to win 16 rounds is declared the winner. Despite the fact that gamers younger than seventeen are not accepted to compete in official tournaments, there is no control of users' age at cyber cafes, LAN houses, or Internet in home downloads in Brazil.

Three main features identify CS[6] and differentiate it from other games in the market of entertainment. Firstly, CS is a First Person Shooter, a game centered in shooting gameplay in which all actions are realized through the first person perspective (and first person point of view). In other words, gamers' actions are perceived on the screen as if through her own eyes. Additionally, by means of operating a keyboard or a mouse, the player projects her actions towards the game world through the avatar's hands who manipulates the best lethal weapons that she could afford to pay with the virtual money earned from her killings in gameplay. Besides, seeking for more realisticness[7] in gameplay (Galloway, 2006) fan gamers migrated from fictional worlds and fights with aliens in *Half Life* in order to play and mod CS maps in the skin of terrorists and anti terrorists forces and in scenarios that represent closer places to CS players' non fictional environments.

Secondly, CS was programmed as a mod, and according to digital leisure culture of the late 1990's, a mod was considered a sub cultural creation. When Minh Le and Jess Cliffe co-created CS, video games in *semi open* source were not usual, game developers would not allow game fans to insert their own creations of add-ons[8], levels, mods, skins and wads to the VGs (Schleiner, 2005) nor change some rules for game play. At that time, modders and hacker gamers used to engage Internet subcultures around the games, their modes and machinima[9] in subversive and challenging attitudes either for fun or for recognition of

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[5] Information from World Cyber Game site: www.wcg.com/**rule**PDF.../WCG_2009_NC_CS_**Rules**

[6] CS is the name Half Life's mod, and CS 1.6 one of the 4 version of mod serials

[7] Galloway (2006) uses this term to mean the representation of real places and people rather than social reality.

[8] Definitions for add-*ons, levels, mods, skins and wads* are available at the glossary section.

[9] Machinima are online presentations (videos and movies) made by using the same tools as for modes, but they are created just to be watched. Please go to Glossary section for more details, examples and links.

their abilities as game developers in the emerging market of game production in the U.S. and Europe.

And thirdly, the development of the Internet and the popularization of cyber cafés and LAN houses in the late 1990's enabled CS gamers to play in the multiplayer mode on line, and the most dedicated players, as cyber athletes, started to compete in teams in large-scale competitions around the technologicalized world; teams have been sponsored by hardware producer companies, VG industry, and LAN houses in a micro scale. I found in VG specialized magazines that it is assumed by CS followers that this game is one of the games responsible for the massification of online VGs and the popularization of LAN houses and not the contrary. Series of CS were released by Valve corporation such as Counter Strike 1.6., Counter Strike: Condition Zero, Counter Strike: Source, Counter Strike: Anthology, Counter Strike on Xbox and Counter Strike Lite.. The fact is that CS, the first mod version created by college students, achieved the proportion of a cyber sport after being strategically managed, digitally improved and rank shifted or sold as a game (Schleiner, 2007; Macktavish, 2008). Just to exemplify the popularity the game arouse, I will mention the 2003 World Cyber Games event (Prensky, 2006): by then, CS World Wide Competition held by Valve company and hosted by Dell computers' industry attracted 10.000 participants and registered 6.000 players. Even in academic Game Studies CS was reported to be the top mod for HL for numbers of players with more than 60.000 players accessing at the time of his research in 2004 (Macktavish, 2008); and the last time I visited the site, on march 2009, it continued to head the list of HL mods with 6307 servers and 38224 on line gamers playing legally.

In Brazil CS was banned for commercialization from October, 2007, to June, 2009[10] . In early 2008 the game was withdrawn from off line stores for containing "immanent stimulus to the subversion of the social order, and for attempting against the democratic and rightful state and against the public safety", according to federal Brazilian judge Carlos Alberto Simões de Thomaz. However, CS could be downloaded and bought on the Internet, and it was played mostly by children and adolescents at home and at LAN houses where local CS tournaments continued to be organized. Furthermore, MiBr, the first professional Brazilian team founded in 2003, has won the Extreme Masters III

[10]Available at Folha on line, 18-06-2009, (2008), http://g1.globo.com/Noticias, (my translation).

Continental Finals America in Philadelphia. By the time of the prohibitions in Brazil, the first edition of Campus Party in Latin America would take place in São Paulo (February 2008). The federal judge's sentence rose great diffusion on the media where frustrated organizers and banned CS tournament players claimed for their rights to take part in the event. Soon afterward, the prohibition of CS and *Ever Quest* games extended controversial discussions in the media questioning the validity of that sentence and at the same time, focusing on possible impact of violence, guerrilla tactics and other undesirable encoded contents in VGs, and it all opened antecedent attitudes among Brazilian neighboring countries. On June, 2009, CS was released from banishment and Electronics Arts Ltda. has informed that CS does not put consumers at any physical nor psychological risk, and the company recommends the game for players older than eighteen.

At the time of that noise in the media and game community involving the prohibition of CS I had just accomplished the pilot Ma project by exploring the independent video game *Cloud* where I had spotted visual and audio relations in the multimodal analysis of the game that might converge the perception of pleasure among players who enjoy listening to relaxing music and enjoy flow feelings and non violent imagination. *Cloud* and CS seemed completely different games and designed for absolutely different consumers.

As a researcher I am interested in studying how multimodal resources co- work in making meanings in video games and the role of language in interconnecting, in dialectical relations, networks of social practices (Fairclough, 2003) of diverse sorts. I had the intuition that exploring multimodal features and discursive representations in that CS mod launched as a first person shooter game would be stimulating and meet my interests. All that elicited my curiosity whether I would find textual traces of stimulus to the subversion of the social order in this game, or at least, what voices I would find in the discursive representation of this controversial digital war toy.

In this study and for the purpose of the research, I will refer to video or digital games as complex multimodal semiotic systems being operated by means of either console, Xbox or on line personal computer electronic platform.

1.2. Significance of the research

It is quite a commonsense among gamers that video games are just meant to be played. However, messages encoded in video games via multimodal language as well as rules in the game play are worth exploring deeply since video game playing proved to affect users in different ways: entertaining, aiding in learning (Jenkins and Squire, 2003), widening players' social network and skills (Gee, 2005), familiarizing players with new technologies and interactive transit through cultural and social spheres in fictional worlds (King and Krzywinska, 2006; Lemke, 2002; Merchant, 2001), and also training strategies and tactics for diverse practices in the serious world (Gee,2005; Squire,2003). Besides, the actually privileged position of hybrid texts in cyber and printed spaces negotiating and multiplying meanings within diverse modes and ways of representing language (Unsworth, 2001) makes video games attractive ergodic 'textual spaces' to be explored and critically understood (Frasca, 2004) through social semiotics lenses. Standing as an educator, and considering the already generalized familiarity of today's learners with VGs, I envisage connections unfolded from this study with further critical approaches to teaching.

The analyses of the cover of CS 1.6 may provide elements to understand excerpts of contemporary multimodal texts, such as VGs, from a critical point of view, and contribute with the discussions on messages framed under the format of entertainment.

One main reason for this research is related to the growing preoccupation of those responsible for education and language teaching in Brazil; it is reflected in the Parâmetros Curriculares (PCNs) when suggested that

> …Students should participate in meaningful activities where the second language is used and 'learning needs arise'; **….** meaningful and everyday life texts should be incorporated to language classrooms as a way to sensitize students about the role of language (visual, written, aural) in constructing meanings and explain reality, acting upon the construction of representations; (…) second language teachers should integrate new technologies activities into the syllabus rather than just adding them to the rest of other pedagogical practices. (My translation)

Those guidelines proposing that teachers should update their relationships with students using contemporary texts evoked to me the use of video games as a possibility to converge an innovative approach to multimodal literacy despite the complexities of the on line learning environment (Warshauer & Whittaker, 1997) such as the school computer lab conditions where the activities would be held, and awareness of the role of the teacher and the skills needed in a wired classroom.

On a personal level, this work has contributed to my learning more about how language is being used in multimediated environments and it has been particularly interesting, and hopefully useful, to unveil social practices and social actors that language traverse having the discursive representation in CS as point of departure.

Finally, I hope this research may contribute to the discussions around the construction and response to meanings construed in video games and the role of language in both: reinforcing given social values and structures, and enabling social change.

1.3. Objectives and Research Questions

This research aims to understand and to interpret the representation of the discourse of war as entertainment in the cover of the first person shooter game Counter Strike 1.6. by pursuing answers to the following general research question:

How is the discourse of war as entertainment represented in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

To be more specific:

1) What are the ideational meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

2) What are the interpersonal meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

3) What are the compositional meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

Finally, I draw on the conclusions from data analysis, and as further considerations I reflect on possible uses of VGs in critical learning that I observed along the research.

1.4. Method

For this qualitative research I have taken the following procedures:

a) Game play *in solo* and in team, and maps exploration for personal familiarization with the game play.

b) Documental research on videogames studies in order to learn about the rational for theoretical approaches to games and video games, as well as the specificities of the medium in relation to other texts (like the ergodic aspects or the possibility of construing narratives).

c) Visit to a Game Party and to LANs where CS game was played in teams and Web visits to CS sites and forums; unstructured face to face and on line interviews plus a questionnaire (held during SEPEX, 2008) accompanying researcher's annotations photographically documented regarded video gaming, social practices and literacy that I have saved for further works. Finally, as part of a critical reading that might help the understanding of how media co works in construing meanings for the game, I explored articles in specialized national and international journals where I could spot, for instance, relevant discursive practices involving servers and players while construing an identity to the so called *CS nation*, how the prohibition of CS1.6 in Brazil was reported, and what are the mains themes when shooter games are advertized like in *"Em tempo de Guerra, quem tem armas é rei"* at *Top Games magazine* (images are available at Appendix 4)

1.4.1. Procedures for data collection

a) Game download form Internet on February 2008

b) Transcription and critical observation of the introduction to the game

c) Selection of the unit for analysis

The unit for analysis in this work is the cover of the game: I collected data for analyses from the still image, the menu and logo, and sound effects in the cover of the game CS 1.6.

Secondary data was collected in internet official and unofficial game's sites, games' magazines and academic web sites which were useful for research contextualization and data interpretation.

When it was time to choose a sample to analyze the discursive representation in *CS 1.6*, I decided for the introduction to the game as a point of departure. From the introduction, as a discourse analyst, it should be possible to detect essential meanings created for this game considering that options for playing actions and modifications[11] are set through the Introduction, and thus, multimodal language arrangements in the Introduction should condense the essential elements of possible narratives for the whole game. In other words, the Introduction section represents the semiotic key for the game which is coded in the arrangements[12] for gamers' and modders' performances.

1.4.2. Procedures for data analyses

Following Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) proposal to social semiotics as tools for multimodal analysis, I focus on the ideational, the interpersonal and compositional structures of the visual representation of discourse of war as entertainment and I reflect on the significance of the most salient aspects of the discourse of war as entertainment in the cover of CS1.6. I draw evidence from deeper pages of the introduction to the game. I present main findings and organize items focusing on answers for the research questions. I conclude discussing general findings and relate them to possible pedagogical implications of my study. Finally, I suggest some topics for further research.

Regarding the written block in the cover and Logo of the game, I analyze them in the typographical construction of meanings. Concerning audio effects, I reflect mainly, on the interpersonal role of sound in construing meanings of war as entertainment in the cover, and I draw reinforcing evidence from the subsequent pages of the introduction to the game.

Considering that discourses are present in texts as instantiation of social and cultural processes and somehow related to broader social practices, I make connections with some main aspects of discourse of war on contemporary war toys distributed around the planet, mainly, by global American corporations (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2009).

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[11] For instance bot options for Cup players, buy weapons menu, or mouse and audio options.

[12] Through sound, images and written **Options** menus

1.5. Outline of the Thesis

In this section I provide a guideline for the reader of this thesis. It contains a total of five chapters. In Chapter1, I present the context of investigation, the significance of the research, the objectives and research questions, and finally, the method used. In Chapter 2, I review the three theoretical pillars on which this work is based: Video Games Studies, Multimodality, and Literacies. In Chapter 3, I proceed to the data description and pararell discussion of the related findings. In Chapter 4, I restate the research questions, and present the results of this investigation followed by interpretation and reflection of the results. Finally, in Chapter 5, I summarize the main findings of this research, present pedagogical implications, and limitations of the research and offer suggestions for further works.

1.6. Summary of this chapter

In this introductory chapter, I have focused on: a) contextualizing the investigation; b) describing the relevance of the study; c) detailing the procedures used for data collection and analysis; and d) commenting about the motivation behind the study. Finally I have designed the outline of the thesis.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter I present theoretical support in the intersection between Video Game Studies, Multimodality, and Multiliteracies.

2.1. Video Game Studies

In an attempt to understand video games in its nature and its potentialities in education, I have reviewed canonical readings that delimit what games are and their particularities when developed in electronic form. Besides, I present some of the main academic discussions and agenda in video games studies because I believe that they allow picturing the eclectic landscape of contributions and academic positioning that re-contextualize the old activity of play, now operated through technological medium.

2.1.1. Games and toys in the culture: Huizinga, Caillois, Piaget and Sutton- Smith

> Play is a voluntary activity or occupation executed within certain fixed limits of time and place, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, having its aim in itself and accompanied by feelings of tension, joy, and the consciousness that it is different from ordinary life.
>
> (Huizinga, 1955)

The fusion of play with multimediated communication, especially with the emergency of video games (VGs), has made it retake the study of play activity as a cultural phenomenon among players of all ages. For the classic reference in game studies, the Dutch linguist Johannes Huizinga (1938) p*lay* is necessary to the culture in nurturing instinctive forces of civilized life. He introduces the term *hommo ludens* in analogy to *hommo sapiens*, both as identifying characteristics of human nature. Interested in the sportive quality (the

play element) present in serious activities such as war, law, philosophy or art, the author (idem. 1955) differentiates play activities from serious activities and he points out that combat and play are not just metaphors, but blended ideas since archaic times; besides, he differentiates the agonistic[13] from the ludic element in warfare; the *ludic* element is given when play is held against antagonistic members in a sphere and regarded as equals in some way. Both war and play share some aspects like the concordance to rules, the fields for the match, the identifying symbols, the fighting that becomes a matching of forces and the comprising ideas of justice, fate, heroism, honor and values of loyalty to a group. However, meanings for conflict or *agon* and competition or game are not so close when combat is against a group of participants not recognized as human beings (e.g. barbarians, devils, heretics and 'lesser breeds without law'). The string of Huizinga's research leads him to conclude that this restricted system has constituted the bases for the 'law of nations', and has recognized in it *the ideal of a community of mankind with rights and claims for all* (the pair ones that were part of the same culture, I should add). Huizinga (1938) also differentiates states of 'war and peace' from the state of 'total war'; in other words: he puts apart the play element in some *rites of initiation* as joustings, tournaments, duels, and even 'holly' battles from the nature of brutal killings whether they are for hunger, fear, religion or mere cruelty wherein the play element does not exist anymore and he illustrates all that with examples from diverse civilizations and periods.[14]

Drawing from sociology and anthropology, Roger Caillois's (1967) contribution to VGs. studies is remarkable because he refers to four predominant characteristics in societies related to ways of being and play people prefer to practice in different times. Scholars and the VGs. industry have mostly considered principles from this trend to study and produce VGs. Caillois (1967) categorizes games in *agon, alea, mimicry* and *illinx* according to the kind of activity inherent to the game, the kind of rules, and the time and fields required to perform

[13] The Agonistic element regards contest, conflict and (verbal) dispute. The term Agon is originally related to athletics and music contests in Ancient Greece, and in Caillois's (1967) classification of games, Agon is used to identify games based on competition where players try to beat each other.

[14] As a general observation after reading his canonical work, I could remark the absence of the female participation along the reading of *Hommo ludens*. My doubt remains whether it is because *the* culture to which the author is referring to is restricted, or if it is the author's voice and his point of view to reflect on the role of play in the culture.

them. The *Agon* element predominates in games of competition where gamers try to beat each other, for instance car race, chess game and shooter games; the *alea* element prevails in games based on chance such as bets and lotteries; *mimicry* and simulation rule playing dolls, pilot simulator or *Sim City series* where players pretend to take part of an imagined or alternative reality; and games strong in *illinx* element are those where pleasure is found in movement and vertigo such as running, jumping, playing thieves and cops or *Wii*. Regarding those elements present in games we can call *Counter Strike* a semi-simulator game very strong in agon and illinx.

In relation to the rules required to play games, Caillois differentiates two groups: *Paidea* and *Ludus*. Games in *paidea* category are those with predominant free and simple rules as jigsaw puzzles, or playing with the mouse using windows art tools; games in *ludus* category, on the other hand, are those games with predominant fixed and complicated rules to play like chessboard or poker. Traditionally, spaces for *paidea* toys are playgrounds where time is not relevant to the playing activity, while boards, fields or courts are spaces for *ludus* games which are besides, usually time constrained. Those characteristics are not fixed in most games, for instance *paidea* is the typical playing activity of a child when she is jumping with a rope, but the *ludus* element enters into play if a friend comes with her own rope and they both start competing who can jump speedy or who is the one who can jump more times in a row. *Paidea* and *ludus* could be translated to the expressions 'play' and 'brincar', and 'game' and 'jogar' in English and Portuguese respectively. Finally, VGs stronger in *paidea* are used as toys while VGs. stronger in *ludus* are marked by some kind of competition and the rules to win the game.

Finally, in Caillois' essay *El Juego y Las Sociedades* (1958), he concludes that one could guess a society by the games their people play. In a way, aspects of this concept coincide with Machin and Van Leeuwen (2009) who analyze war toys of the past 100 years, relate their findings to dominant discourses of war of the time, and conclude that children are recruited not just into the war on terror but also the values of corporate capitalism.

From a different perspective, rules, regularities (norms) and kinds of playful activities are also studied by Piaget (1962) regarding relations between different games and cognitive aspects in children. He classifies games in three main categories: *games of exercise* (like the ones performed by babies and young children), *symbolic games* (like in role-playing games where imagination plays an important place,

normally starting between 2 and 7 years), and *games with rules* (which undergo with children socialization processes, agreement to social constraints and the notion of winning or loosing). According to Piaget those (playful) activities flow with child development and remain during adulthood.

Concerning play and general social contexts, according to Sutton- Smith (1986) toys are cultural indicators worth examining because they represent one of the ways in which cultures over-determine the social lessons they want to transmit. In his words: 'anything that is important in a culture is over-determined. That is, it is taught in many different ways and with much redundancy to make sure that the targets of the teaching get the message' (idem, p.43). For him, games and toys in themselves are not responsible, for example, for the creation of the genre stereotypes present in the discourse of toys such as in Barbie dolls or robots, yet they are stable ways in which those social roles and the narratives involved are transmitted in our culture. In other words, according to the author games and toys can become 'identifications" central to children's lives and may influence their choices as adults.

Those aspects reviewed above regarding the roles of games and play activities are crucial in understanding meanings construed for games as well as in being point of departure for a critical approach to video games studies, on a discursive perspective. All these aspects concerning CS will be discussed in chapter 4 and chapter 5.

2.1.2. Games on the Screen.

The term video game (VG) suggests a playful activity technologically mediated; still it would be naïve to reduce VGs studies to game and computer science areas. To start with, the concept game is sometimes less outlined than it would be desired; if we consider *Tennis for Two* on the oscilomether[15] as point of departure to study video games, we may understand the variety of approaches to VGs. studies, each prioritizing one aspect or others of this multifaceted cultural artifact that grows technologically complex and tends to converge between media specially after the popularization of the internet.

In this work, I will extend the term *videogame* to its broadest possible meaning including text and image-based game software, either

[15]E-sites addresses with image register of the technological evolution and history of video games are available at Appendix 1

for training (educational) or entertainment purposes, using console or personal computer as electronic platforms since that is the way that CS1.6 is played.

2.1.3. Video Game Studies. Theoretical relations with drama, storytelling and machines that produce signs

According to Frasca (2001) since the revolution of video medium for games in the early 1980's and the increasing academic interest, scholars have enriched the research field with multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches either from humanities and education, social and computer sciences, industry and engineering. From the Humanities and/or Education, some approaches to video games have provided answers to questions related to *what meanings are made through games* and researchers have investigated for instance, the relations between game and player and the roles that players assign to VGs. in their lives (Machin & Suleiman, 2004; Schleiner 2002, 2005; Thomas & Walkerdine,2000a; Pichlmair,2005; Leppalaht.,2004; Gee, 2005; Crogan, 2006; Krzywinska, 2006; Galloway, 2006; Pearce, 2006, and Machin & Van Leeuwen , 2009 among others).

Regarding approaches to VGs. studies, Laurel *(*1991), from an Aristotelian point of departure, finds equivalent roles for players in the computer medium to roles of both drama performers and audience in theatre. In *Computers as theatre (1991),* she describes computers not as big calculators but as a medium for designing action. It is not that she compares computers to theatre but in times when computers were mostly used for 'serious work', she can see the computer as a medium wherein actions operated by designers and gamers are represented on the screen. Other approaches to video games (Landow, 1992, 1997; Grusin, 2006; Murray, 1997; Jenkins, 2003) made theoretical connections between VGs. and other texts (in diverse media) based in storytelling such as movies, novels and comic books.

According to Juul (2009), Landow (1992,1997) has the merit to have pointed to hypertext and technology as something that is not in radical opposition to 'the book'; besides, he collected the canon of texts that are now considered central to build VGs. theoretical sources[16].

[16] Examples of theoretical texts that would contribute to define games in the new medium, hypertexts and ergodic literature are: Theodor Nelson's essays from the 1960's where the term hypertext is introduced, Jorge Borge's short story The garden of forking paths (1941, 1962) on

Murray (1997) sees computers as a medium, better said, as a new medium for 'the old practice of storytelling' and in her interpretation of computers as narratives she identifies three features which are also present in VGs. immersion, agency and transformation.

Regarding video games medium, this phenomenon occurs in various ways, for instance the films *XMan , Residence Evil* and *Tropa de Elite* have being remediated into video games with the same name, and the book *Harry Potter* was remediated first into a film and then into several digital games. The inverse phenomenon can also be noticed: *Counter Strike* and other commercially successful VGs. have been re mediated frequently from digital and interactive medium to commercial movies (e.g. *Super Mario Bros., 1993; Doom, 2005*) and video clips of games, *in home* created by fans who put them for free download in sites, blogs and video channels. The concept Remediation is particularly useful to be considered when including new media literacy to language teaching. In fact this phenomenon implies increasing convergence of the visual and verbal to such an extent that (language) teachers (especially in writing) will need to develop new paradigms so that we don't lose sight of the purposes for writing and communication in general terms.

Espen Aarseth, in his *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature* (1997) does not consider computers as drama nor as narratives; but for him, they are machines that produce signs that differ from reading to reading, more specifically: from one playing performance to another. In video gaming, the ergodic is obvious: almost every gamer will play in an individual way, she will make different moves across the game 'text' according to her playing skills, decision taken, available tools to play, team mates' actions, and so forth. However, all actions are mediated by the ergodic in the game: the click of the mouse, the physical response to the text of the game as it appears on the screen and that will move the course of action (the micro narrative) in one way or another. According to Aarseth (1997), the interactive and ergodic aspect is the point of departure applied to analyze not only hypertexts and video games, but also some electronic books and other creative writings (printed and digitized) that do not require conventionalized sequence to texts' readings.

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the literary level where the idea of narratives in labyrinth structure came from, and Michael Joyce's Afternoon (1989) in the electronic medium where reading experience is mediated by the click of the mouse and the readers decision of what to click.

2.1.4. When ludology meets narratology

Main discussions on VGs. studies have been carried out between ludologists and narratologists. Ludologists headed by Espen Aarseth, Jesper Juul and the group from *Games Studies*, the International Journal of Computer Game Research who argue that what identifies the video games' gameness are the rules and the participatory nature of gamers in terms of the *ergodic work required to traverse the text* (Aarseth, 1997 p.1) and not the story or filmic effects on them. In antagonistic position, narratologists mentored by Janet Murray argue that it is the story of the game and its narrative (the sequence of chained actions) the fundamental elements that guarantee gameness in video games. Additionally, she refers to the *satisfying power to make meaningful action and see the result of our decisions and choices* on the screen (idem, 1997 p. 126) is remarkable aspect of the participatory nature of digital games in terms of *agency*.

Attempts to find theoretical points for negotiation between ludology and narratology were tried by Henry Jenkins. He considers that the gaming experience cannot be reduced to the experience of a story in the game. In other words: not all VGs. tell stories (e.g. digital Tetris and Scrabble, or the social game *Free Rice*) and when they do have a story in the game, it can be told in one of the many possible ways that the medium allows. In fact, narratives are important elements in video games but differently from film or fiction literature, there are games which do not depend on the story to be good games, that is, to be well accepted and enjoyed by their users. More recent reflections on this new medium tend to consider that it seems pointless to take radical part either for ludological or narratological approach to VG studies (Frasca, 2004; Pearce, 2006; Bizzochi, 2007, Jenkins 2007) because in doing so, in Aarseth's words, "one would imply dismissing the core differences that characterize gameplay and storytelling". Anyway, those debates have served in a special way to study a display of narratives in games, their elements - such as characters, environment, and parallel micro-narratives- and how they operate in video gamic environment.

2.1.5. Ergodic Texts in video games

Notwithstanding theoretical controversies discussed above and regarding VGs theory, Aarseth developed the notion of *the* ergodic element in some texts (either in print or digital media) and expanded the

hypertext theory[17] . This theory had been introduced by Nelson (1965) who first considered hypertexts as a medium for texts[18]; yet, Aarseth (1997) had noticed that some texts (printed or digitalized) propose more than one path for possible readings: the linear conventional reading, and other readings either following 'the guide' suggested by the author[19] or traversing the text more freely as in the case of gameplay. Three main kinds of narratives or strings for action in games were described (Aarseth, 1997; Landaw 1997; Juul, 2004). Figure 2.1 illustrates, on the left, a simple biforked narrative which in games represents the options for possible narratives that the game (or the text) offers. Figure 2.1, on the right, illustrates a more complex structure where the machine of the game offers the gamer, a piece of text, or whole a situation (which is represented by the orange rectangles). These mini texts can be combined in different ways according to the gamers' choices and skills to play. In this kind of narratives, gamers may experience diverse paths to achieve the end and do not need to traverse all textons to win.

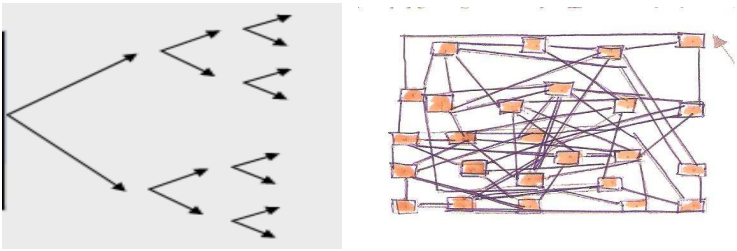

Fig 2. 1 Simple bi-forking and more complex narratives with multiple possible readings and closed ending

A third kind of narrative or string of actions occurs in complex and unpredictable ways because players are allowed to perform micro-narratives resulting from combinations of the elements[20] programmed in the hypertext at the machine of the game. In this way, game narratives

[17] The World Wide Web (w.w.w.) is the most famous hypertext. Out of this hypertext, a great number of other texts, images and videos can be quickly linked and retrieved. Aarseth thought of the text of the game (the machine with the rules) as a hypertext where diverse textons or little peaces of text are linked to each other in many possible ways and build the game a narrative.

[18] Nelson had linked the use of hypertexts in computers not to game narratives but to educational functions of storing and retrieving information out of a particular subject in meaningful however non linear ways.

[19] as in book 2 from Cortazar's *Hopscotch*

[20] Just as game rules, game options setting, number of players and their performances.

can be compared to complex systems where each player performs her own micro-narrative, but actions and circumstances of one player will interfere in the development of the others' narratives. For instance, in Half Life, CS1.6 and others alike, the in game evolution of a players' narrative (and her team's as well) will be related to the one player's skills[21], the whole team's performance and the performances of the enemies' actions. And the most powerful aspect of this phenomenon is that all these narratives can be visualized altogether at a certain state of the game.

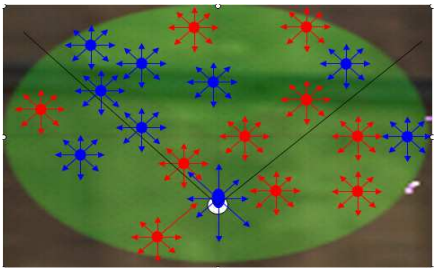

Fig 2. 2 Representation of given 'state' at any time in a micro-narrative in CS 1.6

The figure above intends to represent a narrative in computer VGs which can be compared to a complex system in a give 'state' at any time (Juul, 2001). The image represents a one player's narrative in the game, such as CS 1.6, where the green field represents the whole map[22], the gamer is the blue circle at the corner of the angle, the black angle delimits his field of vision and action in the map; the red circles represent the T players and their space for action and the blue ones represent the other CT players. It can be noticed that each player have her space of action, however the actions performed by one player can influence the game of the other player. In terms of narrative, the micro-narrative of one player may be affected by the skills and actions of another gamer.

Those features regarding the structure of ergodic texts in games are also present in diverse E-literature and electronic texts which

[21] Some play skills like quick and strategic firing action, selecting the right weapons, assertive communication with teammates, knowledge of the map, etc.

[22] In order to complete the idea of complex system, it seems opportune have in mind that in this figure, the green field represents only 1 map out of the 120 maps of the revised version, and that other gamers could be performing their own micronarratives simultaneously.

gamers are familiar with and these gamers' previous knowledge could be saved to introduce them in diverse literacy activities as it will be suggested in chapter 5.

2.1.6. Discourse in ergodic texts

VGs. as ergodic digital texts have textual features adequate to the medium. Firstly, VGs. are dialogic: they provide digital platforms where digitalized dialogic relations take place in game (while playing) and off game when new narratives are imagined, programmed, and knowledge is exchanged among users.

Secondly, VGs are dialogic tools (Sutton- Smith, 1986) for players to practice their own agency, and incorporate ready-made models in games into original patterns and narratives. This textual characteristic is observed in CS 1.6 not only during the game play itself but also in the Menu section of the game where new maps are added by players of different places; eventually, they are put for free download and play.

Thirdly, VGs. as ergodic texts are material objects produced in discourse (Hodge and Kress, 1985. p.6), and this suggests that they carry the ideological position of their producers. In CS 1.6, it is possible to notice the ideological position of the games' producers who gave the actual format to the mod ideologically situated with modders and players from the globalized CS game community, better said, from CS nation[23] members. For instance, the first story/mission behind the game was that US and allied 'armies' should counter attack the Middle East 'militia'. In an interview with the creator of CS1.6 mod, he reported that after the terrorists attacks of September 11th.(in the real world) the beta version 'just bombed' [24].

Finally, VGs represent a code (Sutton-Smith, 1986), a language with which gamers can construe their own narratives/stories in a way that deep players (Galloway, 2006) [25] insert signs distributed globally to specific contexts of their own serious life worlds such as school and family or social relations.

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[23] CS Nation is the name of one of the biggest CS sites which gather players from around world wide web.

[24] Interview available at www.gamasutra.com

[25] Deep players are gamers who, enjoy the game by making mods besides enjoying the normal game play

2.1.7. Video Games and intertextuality

VGs. relate to other mass media in relations of intertextuality by remediation (Grusin, 2006) discourses and refreshing both old and new media as innovations take hold. For instance, information about war in Somalia and the US intervention was firstly broadcasted by press and television, latter the video game Black Houck Down was launched and finally, a film was made with the name of the game; and Middle East events have found eco in the game Peacemaker that included real life photos, videos, maps and news reports as material for the game. Regarding children literature, popular books like Alice in Wonderland and Harry Potter have been re-mediated from printed book to film and game, and lately, reprinted in 3D film. These paragraphs above, briefly illustrate part of the rich display of contemporary discourses encoded in VGs and which could be used in learning literacies critically oriented.

Additionally, relations of inter-textuality between games and other texts seem to be spatially and historically contextualized and to attend to powerful and dominant interests. It is possible to 'listen' to the voices of hegemonic discourses (Caldas Coulthard and van Leeuwen, 2004) in toys and VGs. For instance when exploring shooter games – F.P.Ss[26] as well as T.P.Ss-[27] we will notice discourses of war and violence as entertainment represented in them since the nature of shooter games is shooting at targets normally expected to be the representation of *living beings*. Some *shooters* that have discourse of war as main theme are available for children and teenagers' enactment in game and out of game. In doing so, these shooters familiarize players (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2009) with stereotypes of militarized muscled body as representation of dominant and empowered masculinity, or by naturalizing and giving moral value to use of lethal weapons as means to resolve conflict.

[26] F.P.S. stands for First Person Shooter. It refers to shooter vgs. in which the avatars' weapons fire from the first person perspective, and simulating an extension of the players' life hand, they create special effects of reality and engagement.

[27] T.P.S. stands for Third Person Shooter and it refers to shooter games in which players' *weapons* fire from the perspective of a third person apart form gamers and avatars, but coming from a third person perspective. This effect creates detachment from the gamer and the scene of action on the screen, and it is believed to enhance less impact of violent meanings onto gamers.

2.1.8. Videogames as social practice

VGs. play is situated in social and cultural spheres (Squire, 2002). VGs. can be understood as social practices among players as exemplified above, and gamers take part in communities of practice which include not only the team partners but also people who design, produce, distribute and not only the team partners but also people who design, produce, distribute and modify video games. Evidence of these can be explored in the games' homepage and other games' sites, blogs, forums, advertisements, face to face interviews, VGs. magazines, and so forth.

Moreover, the whole activity of playing or gaming, choosing characters and styles to play, talking about the game, exchanging knowledge with friends to learn how to play, borrowing, buying or making a game available for either legally free download or illegal (pirate) download from the internet, involve social practices (Fairclough, 2003) which are mediated by discourses. These particular ways of enacting are discursive in nature and within the context of this research which is to understand how meanings are construed in VGs. Gamers' enactment can be considered instances of major social practices in the gaming culture which run through and beyond the game text. Even more specific practices are found in VGs *on-line* communities' sites created around each game and though they are not always supported by the games' official site which would have the authority to rule discourses, recurrent discourses in gamers suggest similar players' preferences and cyber points of encounter and gamers' identification in styles and ways of being which transcend countries and languages and construe meanings across the game's nation. Evidence of these can be explored in the games' homepage and other games' sites, blogs, forums, advertisements, face to face interviews, VGs. magazines, and so forth.

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These particular ways of enacting are discursive in nature and within the context of this research which is to understand how meanings are construed in VGs, gamers' enactment can be considered instances of major social practices in the gaming culture which run through and

beyond the game text. This observation is aligned with the social semiotic theory of communication and coincides with Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, p.41) when they explain that any semiotic system projects particular social relations between the producer of the sign or complex sign, and the receiver or reproducer of that sign.

2.1.9. Agenda for VG studies focusing on text, discourse and social practices

As VGs. production sophisticates and attention on digital media scholar research increases, other works have begun to focus on the kinds and qualities of participatory play, meanings given to personal experience of gaming, and the role of language in communities around each game. More recent studies link VGs. and video gaming with new literacies and critical learning.

Regarding VGs. as texts and cultural artifacts with meanings embedded in the context of other forms of human expression, Krzywinska (2006) links VGs. to the functions and meanings of myth experienced in the real world and in the world of fantasy, adventures and war craft in game play.

Researching on VGs and gender studies, digital fiction, *fan* fiction, identity and pop *culture*, Thomas (2000) points that girls and boys tend to play VGs. in different styles: the girls tend to be less competitive and care about socialization when playing, while boys tend to concentrate their actions just to win the game. In Brazil the media [28] depict FPS girl games in different profile: they are noticed as being competitive, though players and champions that struggle for the rights of playing CS legally.

Communities of role- players (MMORPGs) have been studied in Finland (Leppalahti, 2004) where gamers extended the narratives of the game in their everyday lives in concrete interactions mostly ruled by feeling of belonging; and role-playing was part of a larger network of hobbies of the tribe. Additionally, the sense of the game community was linguistically supported by insider humor and a funny way they choose to present themselves socially.

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[28] Some of the referred articles are: 1)Brasileiras 'alugam' americanas para jogar Copa do Mundo de 'Counter-Strike', 2) Gatas do 'Counter Strike' desafiam marnanjos em reality show', 3) Garotas campeãs saem em defesa de 'Counter Strike'.They have been published by Globo, the broadest web of information in the country since January 2007 when the buying CS was banished. A whole collection of related articles are available at www. Globo G1.com

Moreover, important themes in the area are the ways creative practices are supported by digital games medium; how social, cultural and economic factors shape these practices; and values and ideological messages encoded in the format of war games. In this regard, Machin et al (2006; 2004) have compared the influence of a global technology on the discourse representation of Arab and American war games. Mactavish (2008), on the other hand, who studies managerial strategies of games developers' regarding the distribution of VGs. identifies several economical benefits for game industry from building participatory fan-base communities with free promotional materials for fan-run websites, and even for game developers when they sponsor festivals and contests that feature their games.

Connecting VGs. research and new literacies, Unsworth (2006) has found resources for literacy and literary development in electronic game narratives, and he thinks of ways for the inclusion of commercial and free downloadable e-games domains in classroom activities with literary narratives. Gee (2003, 2004, 2005) intrigued by possible applications that video games might have for learning in and out of school, played and studied commercial VGs. (e.g. the source game for *Counter Strike: Half Life, Deus Ex* and *Halo* among others) and he found general learning principles that popular video games incorporate. He (Gee, 2006) proposes applying those principles (specially regarding the understanding of conceptual knowledge and the problem solving) to general school learning. In fact he does not stand for the use of violent VGs as source for learning, he is *for* the use of what a linguist would call 'the grammar' of 'a good' game, and according to the writer, a good game is a game that people like to play. Moreover, some of the learning principles in 'good' VGs (Gee, 2005) that can be rescued for school learning are: identity, interaction, production, risk taking, agency, well ordered problems, stimulative frustration, system thinking, explore/think lately/rethink, smart tools and distributed knowledge, cross functional teams, and performance before competence.

Finally, I will mention 2 topics that are recurrent in VGs studies agenda: electronic games addiction and possible negative effects as consequence of playing violent VGs. Those themes are not the focus of this research; however, they are related considering that the game I have chosen for analysis, Counter Strike 1.6, is a first person shooter (FPS) that encodes discursive representations of war as entertainment. In this regard, extensive lists of research publications along the last thirty years seem to be inconclusive on whether and how violent VGs affect players.

The General Aggression Model (Anderson, 2002) intends to explain processes to aggressive outcomes, and it is a tool for further research (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Anderson, Gentile, & Buckley, 2007) that correlates discursive representations and negative effects of violent VGs on children and adolescents. A review of the research suggests that children and young adults, males and females, high aggression and low aggression people are all susceptible to increases in aggression, after even short exposures to violent video games. In Brazil, after systematic discursive literature review of 107 research studies held by researchers from Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade de São Paulo and from de Programa de Pós -Graduação em Ciências Médicas da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, it was reported that (Abreu,C; Karam,R et all, 2008) further investigations are needed to determine whether abusive internet and electronic game use should be understood as one of the newest psychiatric classifications of the 21st. century or just substrates of other disorders.

I believe that the signification given to VGs games and the effects that they may elicit, are re created in the interface of their materiality designed by the games' industry (Caldas Coulthard & van Leeuwen, 2004), and the ways and play contexts in which VGs are operated.

2.2. Multiliteracies and Multimodality

The term multiliteracies refers to two major aspects of language: the variability of meaning making in different cultural, social and professional contexts, and the influence of communications technologies. Both aspects allow language to become increasingly multimodal in which written modes of meaning interface with visual, audio, gestural and spatial systems of meaning. In this way, the term multiliteracies is linked to the concept multimodality which refers to the meaning making in different semiotic modes (like image and language) in a communicative event (van Leeuwen, 2005, p.281).

Communication is increasingly multimodal and more than one mode of representation is being articulated to represent meanings, in this way, enabling a text to be enriched with image, written and sound effects; or, a same text being published in print or online, maybe in CD-ROM or filmed, or made up in a videogame. In this way, the concept literacy, traditionally related to the ability to read and write, has

expanded to the notion of the ability to communicate (Christie, 2005) by reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Multimodality refers to the way of representing and understanding language in a broader sense, like making meanings by gestures, body language, fashion, symbols and colors; while **multi mediated** literacies refer to the medium used to communicate verbal, digital or print messages.

Regarding multimodality and education, multimodal social semiotics is a dominant paradigm that concerns itself with how human beings use different modes of communication, such as speaking, gesture, and sound to represent themselves or the experiences in the social world (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996).

Lemke (1994); Unsworth (2001); and Martin (2000) among others, have studied how semiotic systems work together in making meanings. According to Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) social groups that represent high social control and power tend to give more value to the written language than to the visual. An example of this can be evidenced in certain magazines and newspapers of technology, economy and law, hardly ever in games magazines. From another perspective, Lemke (2002) claims that each mode of expression has its peculiarities in making meaning and that they do not compete for significance in a text, and when working together, *meanings in multimedia are multiplicative* (Lemke, 2002), Yet, these authors recognise that pictures can illustrate what a written text cannot say in words and we should have this present in the multimodal analysis. Finally, multimodal texts, visual texts, like written/ spoken texts, are not transparent or naive; besides they are not only socially shaped, but they also shape society (Fairclough, 1989.p.74).

Critical Learning paradigms claim that reflection may overcome awareness and agency which work concomitantly to create meaningful learning and conditions for social transformation in learners of all ages (Fairclough, 2004; Kress &van Leeuwen, 2001; Lemke, 1994a.; Freire, 1985). Critical learning involves changes in participation, empowerment and the subsequent shifts in identity, inferring that those social changes may eventually construct social transformation. Those shifts in identity can be detected through the materiality of the texts; and multimodal functional approach to language offers resources to do the work in both, teaching critically multimodal contemporary texts and offering the metalinguistic tools to produce multimodal ways of expression. Regarding learning paradigms that have in consideration the inclusion of multiliteracies pedagogies appropriate to the multimediated

world of the 21st. century, Unsworth (2001), Lemke (2002); Christie (2004), Kress (2006; 2010) among others have contributed with their insights in multimodal education mediated by new technologies, and have in part, motivated the desire to realise the present thesis.

These principles fit into the pedagogical implications in the last section of this work, when it comes the time to reflect on lessons learnt from the present study and relate them to possible activities involving VGs. and critical learning.

2.2.1. Learning serious staff versus learning from video games

When we think of learning at school, we think of work and effort; when we think of gaming we think of fun and pleasure. Yet, J.P.Gee (2003; 2004) and other writers in education have found that *under the right conditions, learning is biologically motivating and pleasurable*, and that playing games well implies being motivated enough to devote long hours to learning how to play and win. It is not that gamers' mental and motor coordination practice will result in an increase of *general cognitive functioning* (Owen, A; Hampshire, A. *et all* (2010) beyond those tasks that were trained; however, good games provide motivating opportunities of learning, and according to Gee (2004, 2005; Jenkins & Squire, 2004) educators can make school learning better if they pay attention to good video games and apply some learning principles used in them to school learning. For instance good VGs. spring information from multimodal sources: good VGs. appeal gamers visually by using image and written language; they also appeal them aurally by means of game thrillers, sound effects, and *in game* oral communication with other players; good VGs. facilitate digital authoring tools and narratives' manipulation at diverse levels, and *in game and out game* interactivity since they elicit the exchange of experiences and information to play better, and the research to achieve a better gaming performance. In other words: VGs. have the potential to make gamers learn in context and gradually, and convert that new knowledge in successful accomplishment (learn how to win).

Those characteristics in VGs. suggest new opportunities for school education under interactive learning approach. Regarding methodological principles in games, the content in them, even the commercial ones can serve to interests of critical and interactive education. VGs have the potential to introduce gamers into 'collaborative worlds'(Squire, 2003) and make them have meaningful new experiences as we can find in *Civlization III*, *Freedom Fighters*,

Global Conflict: Latin America, *Ayiti: The Cost of life*, and *Darfur is Dying* just to site a few .These games allow players to live out the ideologies surrounding certain events and they can promote research in history and geography, and further discussion over more complex aspects of what it means being, for instance, *a* freedom fighter and a terrorist, or a negotiator of peace in a conflict, or discussing about the correlation between choices made and their respective outcomes or the constraints faced being a family member in a country place in Haiti or in a refuge camp in Sudan

Some of the aspects that VGs share with E-literature are: 1) **Codex** reading as opposed to **Hypertext** reading that concerns differences between ergodic, non linear reading, and linear reading. According to the Aarseth (1997) codex or linear reading takes place in most conventional books that require a sequential path from beginning to the end to traverse the text and for the story to make sense; while hypertext or non linear reading occurs when the reader/gamer is required to move[29] along the text game as in a *labyrinth*, trying new narratives while she asserts and advances in the game or she is defeated and makes new tries to operate the game narrative and win, all that by making choices at the gaming level and thus combining *textons* (represented by the colored rectangles on Fig. 2.1 out of an available Hypertext at the code level; 2**) the notion that players perform different paths** to meet the goal of the game and win their round in the game, and that they do not need to operate all possible narratives present in the machine of the game as represented on Fig. 2.1; 3) **the interaction between player and text** in a machine during play activity and that involves quick cognitive and ergodic choices, the skills in knowing both the rules of the game and how to use the hardware (the keyboard, the computer, etc); and 4) as a result of that, theoretical questions round **aspects of agency and gamers' authorship**, creativity and transgression, and meanings that players give to the micro narratives that the game rules let them create.

Yet, little systematic attention in school curricula is being paid to the teaching of multi mediated literacies according to Kress (1995) in the United Kingdom and the United States (Lemke, 2002). In Australia, Unsworth (2001) is concerned with great need in developing critical multimodal literacies among young learners and the gap that exists between their curricula documents and school practices.

[29] Some written texts, as put before, can also 'open' for non linear readings.

In Brazil, Braga & Costa (2000); Paiva (2001); Heberle (2010) evidence Brazilian researchers' preoccupation in understanding different aspects of multi modal literacy and multi mediated practices in education and in second language teaching as well as teachers' re-definition of communicative/ interactive approaches to (second) language acquisition mediated by computer, and the discursive construction of the participants involved in such pedagogic practices. Besides, the Ministerio de Educação e Cultura (MEC) suggests Students participation in meaningful activities where the second language is used and 'learning needs arise' (my translation) and (second) language teachers' integration of new technological activities into the syllabus rather than just adding them to the rest of other pedagogical practices.

2.3. Language as Multimodal system of choices. SFL and GVD

Based on the notion that Language is socially shaped and determined by social practices; in systemic- functional linguistics (SFL) (Halliday, 1978, 2004; 2006) language is thought of as a system of choices ready to use and realize some communicative function. The systemic functional approach to language contemplates how language is structured for use (the grammar) and describes how language is used in the context of the situation. The semantic unit for analysis is the *clause.*

Connecting the functionality of language *in use* to the context of the situation, for Halliday (1978, 1994, p. 390) '*configuration' of language* in context relies in three variables: *field, tenor,* and *mode.* The field is related to the nature of the social action, the *what* is being talked or written about; the **tenor** refers to the relationships and role among the interactants' or participants; and the **mode** refers to the rhetorical the function of the discourse. Finally, *Field, tenor and mode* are constituents of the *clause* as contextual variables.

Those dimensions of the context of situation correspond, in the semantic stratum, to M**etafunctions;** they occur in the clause at the same time and they construe meaning at the three levels of signification.: 1) The **Ideational Metafunction** that refers to ways of representing the world, the events, and the people, their ways of being, and the entities involved in the related events, it is realized by the Transitivity system; 2) the **Interpersonal Metafunction** that reveals degrees of commitment and formality in the interpersonal relations between the participants of a given interaction, realized by the Mood and Modality system; 3) the **Textual Metafunction** that is realized by

the Theme system, and it has to do with the lexical and grammatical choices used in a given event, and the (patterning) organization of meanings constructed by the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions into logical and coherent wholes as texts in context (Halliday,1994; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). In games as well as in other texts, meanings from the ideational, interpersonal and textual dimensions are produced and exchanged in dialectical relations among game producers and modders and users (in the role of responsive viewers) as well as between users while playing.

Assuming that images are texts visually expressed, Kress and van Leeuwen (1978) extrapolated Hallidays's (1974) approach to verbal language (SFL) and developed a Grammar of Visual Design in which they adapt the three metafunctions to the peculiarities of the medium and recognise that images are also attached to their situational contexts. In this way, the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions, from the verbal language, realize equivalent meanings in the **visuals**, through the corresponding **Representational, Interactive** and **Compositional Metafunctions** which are presented in Table 1 below summarizes the most important systems of signification in SFL (Halliday, 1994) and shows realizations in the verbal language and their proximate correspondences in the visual language, in spite of the intricacies of representing in images that what is being said in words.

In what follows, I will focus on the review of literature of the visual expression, yet, I explain some connections between verbal and visual modes of expression in some relevant topics related to the data for analysis.

2.3.1. Visual Messages. From the Ideational Meanings in the verbal, to Representational Meanings in the visuals

Language is an instrument that enables us to 'build a mental picture of reality' (Halliday, 1994, p. 106) and accomplish a 'mode of action, of giving and demanding goods & services and information' and it is a mode of reflection of the variation and flow of events.

In the verbal mode of expression, in the Ideational Metafunction, the clause is understood as an experiential event. The **Transitivity system** identifies and finds experiential meanings for Participants and Circumstances involved in five kinds of Processes: **Material, Mental, Verbal, Relational, Behavioral, and Existential Processes. Material Processes** communicate outer material experiences, **Mental Processes** express inner experiences and related

to consciousness and affections, **Verbal Processes** encompass human representations created through language, by **Relational Processes** we classify and identify**, Behavioral Processes** refer to psychological states and **Existential Processes** concern the existence of the one(s) involved in the referred process**.**

In the visuals, the **Representational Metafunction** models the visual representation of events. Drawing from the verbal transitivity system (Halliday, 1984), experiential meanings in the representational system (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) are realized through *represented participants, processes* and *circumstances* where, **Participants** are the main people, entities or objects depicted. They are identified on the bases of their functional role on the context of the image.

Processes are depicted by *vectors;* they represent 'action lines'; their presence or absence indicates, correspondingly, narrative or conceptual representations. In Fig. 3.1 conceptual processes represent the main participants and narrative processes, depicted by action lines, are secondary processes represented at the background. **Circumstances** are the secondary participants that contribute to give visual information; however their deletion would not affect the essential proposition of the image. There are Three types of circumstances: **Circumstances of location** which arranges the setting that bridges foreground and background by contrasts in color saturation and can be read as attribute of symbolic meanings*;* Circumstances of Means are the tools with which action is depicted; and Circumstances of accompaniment are the participant(s) which have no vectorial relation with other participant(s) and cannot be read as a Symbolic Attribute. In Fig.3.1 the circumstances are represented by the written text and the yellow stain at the top left quadrant which evokes a flash of light

Images can be either **narrative** or **conceptual** representations. **Narratives** depict events in terms of 'doings' and 'happenings', and participants are connected via *vectors*, and **Conceptual representations** do not use the vector, yet represented participants are depicted in terms of what they 'are' or 'have' or symbolize. In one visual composition it is possible to find conceptual and narrative structures working together in making meanings, as in the cover image of CS-1.6.

In what follows, I will disregard narrative processes, since the represented participants in the cover of CS1.6 game are involved in conceptual processes.

Conceptual representations are determined by the absence of arrows that indicate action. Participants are represented in terms of t*heir more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms*

of class, or structure or meaning (Kress& van Leeuwen, 1996, pg.79*)*. In other words, participants are depicted for what they 'are' or 'signify' rather than in terms of what they 'do'. Conceptual images are emphasized by three process types: **classificational, analytical** and **symbolic processes.**

Classificational processes depict participants in terms of taxonomy, in a Superordinate/ Subordinate relation where participants belong to the same overarching category but at least one participant will be in a lower position and will play the role of Subordinate to another

Superordinate participant. Participants can be organized in different taxonomies or classifications, and will construe a visual hierarchic relation between them in covert and overt taxonomies, which are: **covert taxonomy, simple-leveled overt taxonomy and multi-leveled overt taxonomy.**

In **covert taxonomies,** only the Subordinate participants are depicted, usually represented at equal distance from each other, the same size and orientation towards the horizontal and vertical axes, meanwhile the Superordinate is implied or represented in a text (Kress & Van Leeuwen,1996, pg.81). In **overt taxonomies**, both Superordinate and subordinate are visually represented in a vertical orientation with the Superordinate always above or below the Subordinate participants and following 'tree' structures. **Simple leveled taxonomies** present only one level of branches between Superordinate and Subordinate participants, while **Multi-leveled taxonomies** present more than one level of branches in the tree structure, in this case **Interordinate** participants are in between the hierarchic representation. Relations of hierarchy are normally represented by the 'tree' **conceptual classification** structure where the more general idea (the Superordinate) is represented similar to grater power (*Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996,p* 83).

Through **analytical processes**, participants are represented in a 'part- whole structure' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 89) and they are involved either in the role of **Carrier** (the whole) or **Attribute** (the part), both depicted in their *minimal defining characteristics*. The defining characteristic of analytical processes lies in the **absence of vectors** that evoke action, the absence of compositional symmetry and /or 'tree' classification structures and also, the absence of the features that mark the symbolic processes, it can be read as a visual 'this is' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996. p. 93); yet, the **interactional system of the gaze** dominates in analytical images.

Analytical processes are structured or **unstructured.** In **unstructured analytical processes,** an unordered set of participants in

the role of 'possessive attributes' are understood as the set of *parts of a whole* which itself is not represented such as we can see in Fig.2.3 taken from CS-rio map where diverse icons convey messages to the gamer as the interactive compounding structure in a green circle at the left corner of the screen that indicates in time position of the gamer and her team mates' in the map along gaming performance.

Structured analytical processes are **temporal analytical processes** as in the representation of Time grades**, exhaustive analytical processes** as in science visual description, **dimensional topological accuracy** and **abstraction.**

Fig 2. 3 Image from the CS-Rio mod

Finally, **symbolical processes** depict what *a participant is or means* using **attributive processes** and/or symbolic **suggestive processes.** Both forms of representation are realized by participants having roles the of **Carrier** of meanings**. Y**et In **Symbolic attributive** processes, there are two participants: the **Carrier** that is the participant whose identity is established in the relation and the **symbolic attribute** that is the participant that represents the meaning or identity itself (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, pg. 108); additionally, meaning is identified through at least one **symbolic attribute.** Yet, in symbolic **suggestive processes**, meaning derives from within the **Carrier** and not from attributes it is the Carrier itself that constructs the symbolic meaning.

Symbolic Attributes (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1997, pg.92) are objects made salient in the picture through marked violation of the compositional pattern of size, light, shape, color, tone or place; the

Carrier of meaning can also be pointing the identifying **symbolic attribute** to the viewer, not quite implying action even in the presence of arrows, and when human participants are involved in symbolic attributive processes, they usually pose or display themselves for the viewer rather than look as involved in some kind of action. . Finally, **symbolic attribute**s are conventionally associated to symbolic values For instance, in the cover image (Fig. 3.1) the blurring detail of colors used to depict CT and T soldiers' uniforms, lends to give salience to the symbolic attributes carried by the soldiers (in the role of Carriers). Moreover, the dark grey-blue and dark bluewish green of the soldiers' uniforms mark the represented participants as Carriers of symbolic attributes culturally associated with strategic and thoughtfulness, resistance and hardness; in addition these colors are used to represent gendered social actors. According to Caldas Coulthard and van Leeuwen (2004) shimmering and iridescent toys are girl's toys , while stunning ones are produced for boys**.**

Symbolic suggestive processes have only one participant: the Carrier who creates an atmosphere or 'mood' for the image which suggests symbolic meanings. This 'atmosphere' should depict the generalized essence of the message in the picture. In chapter 3.2 I will analyze a relevant symbolic process that occurs in the cover and contributes to depict discourse of war as entertainment.

2.3.2. From Modality system in verbal language to the Interactive system in visual representations

In the **visual language,** and drawn form SFL and Halliday's interpersonal (meta) function of language, the **Interactive System** looks at the **Mood and Modality** systems that realize the basic *speech acts*.

The speech acts find approximate realizations of the *image acts* in the visual language (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) through the system of the gaze (idem.,1996. pg.121) and the articulation of the modality markers (Machin,2007). It regards meanings exchanged between the image producer, her product and the viewer as well as how the represented visual elements configure realism[30].

Three systems work together to configure interactive meanings in images: **Contact**, **Social Distance** and **Attitude**. These systems co work in revealing (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) the *voice* of the image

[30] Realism: the representation of 'reality' from the point of view of the image producer, and created by the *mood* system (Unsworth, 2001 p. 99)

producer(s), that is, what part of reality she chose to show and how she will present it to the viewer, and may activate an imaginary relation between the viewer and the image represented. The articulation of **contact, social distance and attitude** systems resulted to be revealing in the analysis of CS 1.6 cover*:*

a) **Contact** activates the **visual acts** through either **offer** or **demand** roles of the gaze of the represented participant in relation to the viewer.

In **Offer images,** the represented participant does not make imaginary eye contact with the viewer. We find offer images in the section *Choose a class (*in Appendix 3), in the introduction to *CS.1.6* where players have to choose a T. or a C.T. model to represent them in game. Images are offered in that section as 'items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, p.124).

In Demand **images**, the represented participant is imaginarily connected to the viewer by 'looking' directly, thus, demanding some kind of social response. In the cover image, the two armies convey demand meanings through their gaze, however of different nature. Gestures, facial expressions and even attributes construe the visual message of what kind of relation and response the represented participant demands from the viewer

b) **Social Distance** is the interactive system that correlates in meaning with the distances people keep from one another in every day interaction and according to the nature of their social relations; drawing from cinema and TV, in images, choices for the viewers' *field of vision*. Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) suggest different kinds of imaginary relations and response between interactants[31]. Social distances run from **intimate,** to **close personal, far personal, close social, far social** and **public distance.**

c) **Attitude** is the interactional system that reflects the point of view of the image producer in relation to the angle in which she depicted or arranged the participants. According to the nature of the images, attitudes are depicted subjectively or objectively. **Subjective attitude** is implied by the system of perspective, the selection of an angle from which images have been created.

Kress & van Leeuwen (1996, p.135) consider that images are always socially determined, yet encoded as if they were unique,

[31] Interactants are the viewer or interpreter and the represented participant(s)

individually conceived. For instance, attitudes of involvement and detachment are created by depicting participants from either frontal or non frontal plane perspectives in relation to the viewer.

Additionally, meanings can be realized regarding the angle from which participants have been depicted. Participants shot or digitalized in the eye level angle in relation to the viewer, belong to equal worlds or status, and power relations are established when Participants are depicted from a low angle and shown as if they were looking from a higher position in relation to the viewer. The effect of the low angle shot empowers the represented participant/s over the viewer owed in part, by metaphorical association probably related with power that comes from Heaven (Machin, 2007). The producer suggests meanings of interpersonal relations of inequality wherein the viewer has less social power over the represented participant. Finally, conversely, when participants are depicted from a high angle, they look smaller, powerless and fragile than the ones who 'look' from upper position.

Modality concerns *how real* a *representation should be taken*. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) have developed a scale of eight modality markers which run from high to low modality and that correlate to scales from 'certain' to 'uncertain' in images and from '*is'* or '*will be'* to '*may be'* or '*would be*' in verbal language. Machin (2007) extended the concept to **degrees of articulation** of modality markers; they can depict *reality* from abstract to exaggeration: what we would expect to find in the real world, it is high modality, depicted by the maximum of articulation of modality markers. As a critical analyst I should see how the discourse of war as entertainment is represented in the cover, what elements are represented in detail, for instance, and what elements are abstracted, or neglected, and why.

Some modality markers are**: degree of articulation of detail, articulation of the background, articulation of light and shadow, articulation of tone, articulation of depth, articulation of color modulation and articulation of saturation** It is important to notice that these modality markers take as reference what counts for real, the naturalistic code that will be explained in the chapter I analyze CS.

2.3.3. A few words on Audio and sound effects

The importance of sound and audio in VGs was considered by game designers since early games were created. Most popular VGs have their own sound thrillers, while other mods and games insert film music and diverse pitch. In this sense, sound is an attribute which, in many

cases, identifies the game. Additionally, audio effects help to communicate in play commands, rewards and fail performances, and gamers among themselves.

Sound also works in contextualizing and modalizing the circumstances (van Leeuwen, 1998) or the visual environment for play as one can notice in the introduction to CS-rio where typically crowded Brazilian streets can be heard and a suburban Rap[32] completes the cultural link that *pictures* the scene with local tones. These kinds of sound effects can be added by deep gamers, and this option available from the introduction to the game confers agency to the modder.

2.3.4. From Textual meanings in the verbal mode, to Compositional meanings in the visuals.

The Compositional **Metafunction** in the visual realizes meanings of the Experiential and the Interpersonal worlds (Halliday, 1994; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996. p. 183) and it looks at the way elements are visually arranged and connected and the way that they are combined with graphic elements to give the whole composition features of an integrated text. The compositional structures depict representational and interactive meanings of an image through three interrelated systems**: Information value, Salience** and **Framing**. These principles apply to images as well as to layout

Information value concerns the placement of participants in the different areas of the image and the relation that it creates to the viewer. This system looks at whether information is organized on a **centre/margin relation**, or along the left**/right** position in relation to a vertical imaginary axis or along **top/down** position in relation to an imaginary horizontal line.

The distribution of visual information along the **left/ right axis** is related by symbolical association, to time where in the **Given**, on the left, is what comes first (probably regarding the western linear system of writing), and organizes already known information. The **New** information is organized on the right: it is associated to something that is going to 'be' or to something we do not know yet, or even the fiction

Top/Bottom organization concerns visual information to the **Ideal/ Real,** traditionally associated with heaven/hell, 'what might

[32] The Rap music which was originally inserted in the game had to be removed and changed for another which, unlike the first one, had the consumption of illegal drugs as a motif for the song.

be'/'what is', the fictional/factual, and by association: gamic /serious life context. For instance, in first person shooter games, the weapon is represented at the bottom position in the screen; this design strategy visually blurs edges and tends to equal serious life to gamic reality. Finally, in **centre/margin** compositions, the core or **nucleus of information** is presented to the viewer at the centre of visual space, and the **contextualizing information** is distributed at the margins.

Salience regards the gradation of importance in which participants are presented to the viewer (Kress and van Leeuwen,1996; p.212).The same as in all other visual systems, semiotic structures are not perceived linearly but in a whole, yet, some aspects in the representation should be considered as outstanding in each composition. They are signaled by delicate combinations and complex interactions of salience in **Size, Color contrast, Weight, Position on the planes** and **Perspective** in which participants are represented, and may encode symbolic meanings.

Framing has to do with the representation of **frame lines** and borders (or their absence), **discontinuities of color** and **shape** or **white spaces** which serve to interconnect participants and other elements through the visuals. For instance, the absence of framing between elements represented in a visual composition stresses **group identity** (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996. p. 215) and its presence signifies **individuality** and **differentiation.** To illustrate, Fig.2.3 in section 2.3.1, frame borders and discontinuity of color and shape were used to depict a circular white line that frames the spot that represents the place in the map where the gamer is situated. In so doing, the image *in* the circle is read as belonging to a different level of representation: the circular spot is a message that serves to communicate the players' position, while the rest of the image shows what the player would see if he were actually in the scene.

The following Table 1 summarizes the meaning potential of the Representational, Interactive and compositional metafunctions (GVD)

Table 1 Main VGD realizations: Representational, Interactive and Compositional systems

Kress & van Leeuwen's corresponding Multimodal Metafunctions

Representational Function > Narrative and Conceptual representations

Narrative Structures

Represent the world in terms of 'doings' and 'happenings' via vectors

Participants: objects, people, entities depicted as **actors, goals, sayers** in the produced images.

Processes: **action, transactional reactional, mental, speech, conversion processes and geometrical processes**

Circumstances: **locative, of means, of accompaniment,** etc

2.Conceptual Structures

Represent participants in terms of their timeless essence, class, structure or meaning

2.1. Classificational regards the relation **Superordinate / Subordinate** participants

→**Covert/ Overt taxonomy**

→**Simple / Multi leveled overt taxonomy**

2.2. Analytical relates elements in terms of **parts-whole structure**, participants are carriers & possessive attributes

2.3. Symbolical depicts what a participant is or means using **attributive or symbolic suggestive processes.**

Interpersonal Function > Interactive System

Looks at the degree of articulation of visual elements; and relates how 'reality' is represented to the position of the producer/product/viewer.

1. Contact

→ **offer or demand** realizations by looking at the *gaze* system (or its absence)

2. Social distance

→ from **intimate/personal to social and impersonal** realizations by the *shot distance*

3. Attitude Shows the point of view of the image producer *subjectively* & *objectively*

→ **involvement/detachment** frontal / non frontal plane representation of participants

→ **high angle** gives power to the producer/viewer over the represented participant/s

eye level angle equality relations producer/viewer/viewed element

low angle represented participant/s show/s power over the viewer

→ **action orientation/knowledge orientation** show producer's p. of view objectively

Textual Function > Compositional System

Looks at the arrangement of the elements in the pg. & relates them to social context

1. Information value

→ **given/new :** left/right placement of information as point of departure, ex. before/after

→ **ideal / real** : top/ down elements represented in metaphorical association as either utopist or factual information respectively

→**centre/margin**: compositional elements depicted as the nucleus of information or contextualizing information

2. Salience system

Relations of hierarchy of importance among arranged elements considering:

→**Size, color contrast, weight, position on the planes and perspective**

3. Framing

→**via framing**: frame lines, borders, discontinuities of color and shape or white spaces realize meanings from an ordered world, **individuality and differentiation**

→**via absence of framing :**gather parts depicting less constrainment, **group identity**

2.4. Summary of this chapter

In this chapter I have focused on the Review of Literature concerning: 1) social meanings given to games in general and video games in particular; 2) video games studies; 3) multiliteracies and multimodality; 4) Grammar of Visual Design (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Machin and van Leeuwen, 2009) concerning the metafunctions of representation, interaction and composition

In what follows, chapter 3, I will describe and analyze the cover of the game CS 1.6. Along the discussion, I bring evidence and other comments from the Menu in deeper pages of the introduction to the game and from practices out of the gamic realm however linked to it.

CHAPTER III

3.1. The context for the creation of CS1.6. About Modders and Hackers Culture.

CS was first released in 1999 by Valve Corporation in trial phase BETA 0.6 version[33] (Jensen, 2008); this means that the software was not finished yet, though it was completed through a sequence of improvements in 19 Beta versions on November 2000[34]. It is important to have in mind that CS is, technically speaking, not a game on its own but rather a modification or a mod of Half Life game. In other words, CS writers used Half Life (HL) engine as the algorithmic source to mod the game.

Why it is relevant to have in mind that CS 1.6 is a game 'in process'? Firstly because the incompleteness of the mod has contributed to nurture CS players' community with regular dropped new updates (some for free and some not), increasing the expectations for new improvements and the promise of more pop culture pleasure with each access to the site. Besides, CS popularity was even constructed over videos by fans in the internet mocking and teasing at the bugs of the last version released as close friends would do and that seemed to strengthen the ties of the CS gaming community. Secondly, by releasing some strata of Half Life open for modifications programmers (players and servers) would create new mods with new maps and skins or add audio and sound effects, however under private license operational system (Schleinner, 2005). This means that by giving a local color to the game, servers and deep players (gamers who play making maps) would satisfy the gaming community members and benefit the corporation owner of the game source (copyrights and profits derived from the re mapped versions of any game are all the corporation's and not developers')

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[33] Retrieved from CS official server net in messages to its clients. Researched on 03/2008 at http://server.counter-strike.net/

[34] For a shortcut to information on the history and modifications of CS versions go to Appendix 4; for more detailed explanation go to http://csnation.totalgamingnetwork.com/articles.php/1/2/

In fact, in the mid 1980's and on, VGs. companies started to invest less in hardware (the machines used to play the games) and more in games that would run in them (Schleiner, 2005; Hunter, 2000), and as a consequence of that, hundreds and hundreds of games started to be created ready to compete in the emerging game market. Ownership did not matter at the time, neither efforts invested in modifying a game nor correcting bugs in it. But by the 1998's Game companies had not discovered that strategy yet, except Valve who took a leading position in the profitable mods market, and enjoyed substantial economic benefit from CS modding communities (Mactavish, 2008). In this way and for 'love to the game' and for the 'sake of the old times' CS modding communities did Valve's work by releasing sequel mods of *the* mod and extended Half Life's original story firstly, and then CS and its extensions, all that on beneath of fans and servers.

What I have exposed above is an instantiation that shows that VGs are machines that produce texts (Aerseth, 1978; Frasca, 2004) and as such they require and admit readings, corrections, and improvements to be performed. Besides, the complexity of the electronic media puts in evidence the needs, benefits, and manipulations for profits or enjoyment derived from the many times *free* co-operative work held in mods, maps and adds inserted in a game.

As part of the research of the technological context in which CS 1.6.is being created, I have to include the mods doers – mostly hackers- in the discussion; in fact, since the primordial times of computer engineering, most dedicated computer programmers were hackers.

In the 1960's the word that would name them was not linked to socially maladjusted teenagers or criminal electronic acts from crackers (Brunvald, 1996)[35]. It rather nominated undergraduate students of computer science who had *insatiable curiosity in discovering the circuit logic* (Brunvald, 1996; Levy, 1984) of the room size computers of the late 1950's, and eventually they would create the computers they could play with. In most cases, students 'had' to be hackers; they had to find out how computers worked by literally getting their hands on them; it can be compared to what corresponds to the baby talk in first language learning or the relevance of socializing and interacting in language acquisition .

In fact, a new science related to telecommunications and physics was created in part by co-work of hackers from the Tech Model

[35] Further reading on the Hackers' culture on ' The Heroic Hacker; Legends of the Computer Age'

Railboard Club (1958), the Homebrewer Computer's Club (in the late1970's) and hardware hackers living in the Silicon Valley who used to share knowledge freely (by releasing the source codes to public domain) and composed a code of Ethics still valid and that guarantees this practice which is the fundamental principle of the current Free Software Foundation (FSF) that catalogs useful free software that runs under free operating systems — particularly the GNU operating system and its GNU/Linux variants.

After having introduced aspects of the production of CS , in what follows, I will examine how multimodal language works to realize dominant discourses of contemporary war in the VG. Counter Strike 1.6. cover. First I will contextualize the cover in the introduction and then I will proceed to describe and analyze it.

The Introduction section in CS.1.6 seems to have similar function to most video games: it is the *engine* of the game (Frasca, 2004) arranging available elements for play narratives such as characters, environments, possible actions and rules to be operated by gamers. The introduction to a game suggests a moment of negotiation between the game writer and the reader/ player, and it represents the first step in the work "of physical construction of the text along game play that the various concepts of reading do not account for" (Aersth, 1997, p.1). However, the discursive representations constructed for each game are specific and they are depicted through the visual, linguistic and aural choices made along the creation of the game. The cover, the unit for analysis, in this thesis, is the first page of the introduction to VG. Counter Strike 1.6. Right after the click of the mouse, the computer's back screen blackens and a powerful cover strikes bold screen: two armed soldiers in slightly different uniforms pose together, focus their gaze on the viewer and show their *lethal* weapons ; a yellow stein, yellow lines that resemble rays of light blue brush strokes of tints and shades[36] contrast with the dark blue background and a written block in print letters format completes the composition: this includes the game Logo and the Menu which hides the ergodic aspect of the cover. Overwhelming sound effects create an atmosphere for the game.

[36] Shade is a gradation of color referring to its degree of darkness, tint is a gradation referring to its degree of lightness http://virtualacademy.com

This cover seen before setting the game resembles the covers of printed books. Book covers illustrate and present the product[37] and they also give condensed information about the style, genre and subject of the book that they cover, while many push design to its limit with the purpose of attracting sales attention. Figure 3.1 illustrates the cover of CS1.6 as it appears in the game, with the addition of sound effects. The image of the cover, as in Fig.3.1 is also printed on the box of CS1.6 game; it seems to be rather stable around the gaming community or to have had little change in versions and maps already

Fig. 3. 1 CS1.6 Game Cover

published since1999. Additionally, in the course of the research I could notice that the visual composition of the cover or some of its components[38] identify *Counter Strike*1.6 in tournaments, blogs, and web pages, and it is offered on line for sale as a wall paper poster. Besides,

[37] Since the first books and codices were written, book covers were given different formats and functions. During the last century, they have grown remarkably important as the book industry has become commercially competitive. Adapted from
http:// encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com

[38] That is: the two armies in pose, the logo, or the background.

along the last ten years, the selected cover has been offered in different background colors, diverse class uniforms and even excluding the image of the terrorist soldier at the top right-hand corner. Moreover, the small white silhouette of a person in shooting position depicted in between the name of the game has grown a free distribution desktop icon for any shooter game. The cover as in Fig. 3.1 seems to be still, however, it is part of the ergodic text produced for the introduction of the game.

3.2 Symbolic representations of war as entertainment in the cover of CS1.6 game

The cover of the game (Fig.3.1) is a conceptual representation wherein the main Participants are involved in symbolic attributive processes; they are Carriers of Symbolic Attributes that depict meanings of war as entertainment. Additionally, the Circumstances co-work with sound effects in creating the atmosphere for the game, a suitable '*mood*' for the purpose of the cover which is to engage prospective users to the pleasures of playing shooting game, yet, it does need to be subtle enough in showing war action.

Both participants are portrayed as men of arms, showing their timeless essence in terms of class, hierarchy and meaning, and they are represented in terms of what they 'are' or 'have' rather than in terms of what they 'do'. They are both depicted in the role of Carriers of meanings and allow viewers to observe their symbolic attributes: their uniforms with insignias, head and hand protection, and their weapons. The symbolic attributes that they display are conventionally associated with symbolic values. Their insignias evoke class identity; however, according to the symbols in the insignias, the represented participants do not to belong to the same class; both of them cover their heads, yet, one of them seems to *protect* his head with a polished shinny helmet that connotes prized military values of discipline, self care and technology; conversely, the other armed man seems to hide his face with a mask as a burglar would do. Finally, the symbolism of the soldiers holding the weapons upwards conveys meanings that evoke strength and aggressive power, yet, no menacing to the viewer. The soldier at the frontward of the cover displays his pistol which represents the tool that guarantees pleasure in shooter games, and the posture of his body displays the

weapon, making him look like a Hollywoodian star in a film poster[39]. Conversely, the posture of the other man holding a rifle with the barrel in upwards position symbolizes challenging power and resembles one of the many revolted militia illustrated by the Western media.

Relating the information above, we can say that the feature of salience (as introduced in chapter 2) conferred to the symbolic attributes co-construe meanings of power and hierarchic[40] relations between the soldiers, and identifies the Terrorist (T) as the less salient man at the right corner of the cover, and the counter terrorist force (CT) as the more salient armed man in the center of the cover. Other differentiating attributes between both participants can be found 'inside' the cover, in the Menu section Choose a Class, where the CT soldiers appear in uniforms that resemble knights in their armors, and T militia wear camouflage, unprotected head and bodies look fierce, *half man and half animal* (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2008), mimetizing their environment. Other examples from the Menu option *Choose a class* show that the "T forces are regarded as fierce factions, evildoers, infamous for their killings and for being bent to on world domination and disgust America Style of life" (from the CS text); while the CT forces are recalled as "defenders of freedom and western interests, for their historical past and being fast responsive elites who earned reputation and who responded to terrorist attacks worldwide"(again, from the CS text)..

In terms of narrative, there are vectors depicted at the background; however, they create an atmosphere for the cover and do not serve to depict T or CT soldiers in action.

3.3. Abstracting conflict in the representation of the cover

Circumstances (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) in the CS 1.6 cover are combined with the dark background and suggest meanings symbolically. In the context of a shooter game as CS 1.6 a light flash resembles an explosion that comes from far and yellow pararell lines evoke the trace of fired bullets; yet, the aggressors are hidden and somehow unknown. This flash of light is arranged at the top left quarter

[39] This posture resembles intertextuality with the posture of Agent 007 in the poster of the spy film From Russia with love.

[40] As discussed in the Review of Literature, the details, colors and quality used for the head protection of the main participant represent technological superiority in relation to the terrorist bot who is depicted with the kind of head protection that common criminals use to cover their faces in their assaults.

of the picture; it outlines and seems to enlighten the two soldiers from their backs. It also delineates the soldiers/heroes and it seems to create an aura effect. On the background, *yellow ray- looking vectors* seem to be projected from the flash of light; those vectors in diverse trajectories combine with the *contrasting steel blue brushstrokes* that come from the dark background and create a feeling of confusing environment where heavy action takes place.

Despite the fact that most war toy productions of the last century have chosen the jungles for favorite 'settings' to play war (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2009), the background in the cover of the introduction to CS 1.6 suggests heavy action and conflict in artistic and subtle modalization: no jungles, no explosions, no blood, no explicit confrontation between enemies; yet action and conflict are abstracted from realistic environment and suggest visually (as described above) and audibly (by means of strong accords which bring to memory familiar Hollywoodian epics).

This artistic digital arrangement contributes to construe a persuasive discourse of war as entertainment where the realisticness of wars and war on terror, their causes, methods, and implications on their participants are omitted and war is insinuated as a game, in fact, as a shooter game.

As the gamer puts to work the machine of the game, that is, as she configures the game to play, the locations to play that were represented symbolically in the front page, recover life through the setting to the game and finally in game action. We can notice that after clicking the menu to set the game, the Play Option entitled Maps is represented typographically first and then, as the gamer enters the gamic world, the place recovers life and turns a 'familiar backyard' to play shooter. This transition from a more symbolic representation of the place to play to a more realistic one puts in evidence the sociological phenomenon of glocalization (Robertson, 1995) in times of globalization: When an operator opens the different maps, she will notice that the places represented in diverse maps assume a local flavor or visual character despite the fact that the game was created in the USA and distributed by the world wide web.

Regarding the **written block**, we can notice two written sets: the Logo which appears superimposed to the image and the Menu and does

not look graphically integrated with the components of the cover, and the Menu section[41] which links to deeper digital levels of the cover.

The Menu section, in *CS 1.6* (Fig 3.1) is a 'tree' Conceptual classification where taxonomies occur at different levels: **a covert taxonomy** is seen in the cover where each option to configure the game is a Subordinate participant, while the Superordinate is not explicit in the text; yet, gamers would recognize it: the Menu. Relations of hierarchy are represented in the Menu where the Subordinate participants with more generalized meaning are arranged in the cover: New Game, Find Servers, Options, Quit, and after a click of the mouse in each participant, **multiple leveled taxonomies** like 'tree branches' will open to the operator as she goes deeper in the Menu text in order to configure the game. Menus in VGs are instances of categorization and of hypertexts that language students could incorporate in their literacy practices with awareness.

The action of traversing the multiple leveled structure of the Menu represents high Agency that empowers the players while they start to engage into the game, for instance when they edit options, choose a map (Fig.3.3), or incorporate an avatar that will fight safe and playful wars beyond the screen.

3.3.1. Making contact with the viewer through the Interpersonal Meanings in the CS 1.6.cover.

As a digitalized composition that has the purpose of presenting the game either to sell or to elicit to play, the cover presupposes strong interpersonal relations invoked between producer/ image and viewer for the final visual arrangement. Besides, as the three interactive systems make meaning simultaneously, the participants **demand** social response to the viewer which is strongly activated by a cohesive arrangement suggested by the soldiers' gaze, the social distance in which they were depicted. Besides, the degree of articulation among modality markers in the cover contributes to create a blurry atmosphere that is an identifying attribute of the game. Beyond graphic limitations in the production of the mod, it evokes polluted environment where gamic war action takes place.

[41] The menu includes the options to choose the maps, servers, audio preferences, and the selection of a terrorist or counter terrorist bot (toy soldiers) to play.

Regarding the Menu and the Logo, they offer social response from the viewers. The written block and the Logo also weave discourse of technology in the representation of modern war as entertainment: written in verdana simple format, this typeface was designed for on screen viewing and the spacing between letters and the large size improve redability[42] and facilitate quick game decision taken.

3.3.2. The demanding role of the gaze as an invitation to play

Both participants establish imaginary eye contact with the viewer, however of a different nature. In order to understand what kind of relation they are meant to activate, we should read it considering its context of production (Fairclough, 2003).

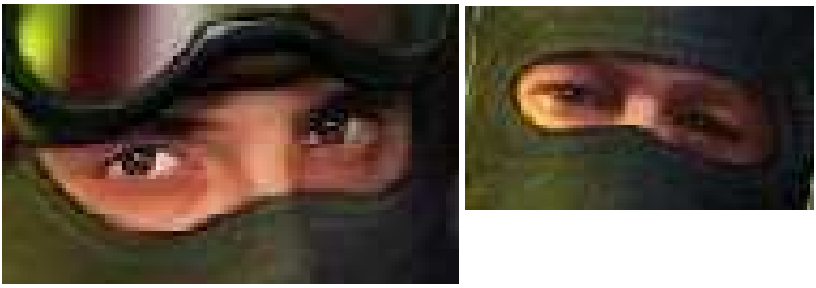

Fig. 3. 2 Different attitudes represented in the gaze of C.T. and T armies

This digitalized cover was designed as an item to present an entertainment commodity, which, as I put before, has extrapolated its initial purpose and has become an icon for the game. In this way, this image (Fig.3.1) has two basic functions to achieve this visual act: firstly, it has to be carrier of the essential concepts that identify the game, in other words: to communicate the *spirit* of game; and secondly, it has to be attractive enough in order to persuade prospective customers to buy *that* product; all these in a relatively small compositional space.

The participant with most *weight* in the composition, the C.T. soldier, brings about a strong imaginary relation with the viewer: he

[42] Redability refers to the quality of written language that makes it visually easy to read. More information available at http://webaim.org/techniques/fonts/

looks focused and attentive, and evokes the gaze of an eagle. The eye zone, realized by effect of tints[43] and the direction of the eyes, is manipulated to give salience to the C.T. soldier's face, empower his gaze and emphasize his message in the demanding visual act.

The tinted (or whitened) visible part of his face is portrayed like the reverse of a mask and contrasts with his shining glasses and the dark olive green face protector. Additionally, the titling[44] of his eyes and eyebrows inwards gives a sharp, intelligent, and somehow fearless and sexy look as it can be noticed in Fig.3.2. Conversely, the gaze of his counter partner, the T force, was portrayed under effects of outward eyes, thick eye brows and shades conveying weary, easy going, and somehow 'unspecial' character which is enforced by the plain dark head protector and the fuzzy shades that involve the gray blue and olive color of his uniform.

I would agree to any claim that the image on Fig. 3.1 is not *the* responsible feature for the success of the game, but I believe that it has had its share in demanding a social response specially in times when national and international conflicts tend to be resolved by violence and the military spirit has to shine and evoke caring confidence.

The cover of the game (Fig.3.1) has the purpose of engaging the interpreter into *C.T.1.6* world. In order to do so, it uses the effectiveness of the image rather than the words. The participant represented at the center of the image interacts mainly by means of the gaze and by showing argumentative attributes of strong symbolic meaning such as the *power of the arms*; the C. T. soldier invites to share his power and heroic recognition with dedicated gamers.

3.3.3. How distant are T and CT forces inside the screen? Social Distance in the cover

In the *C.S. 1.6* cover, the C.T. soldier is depicted in **close personal distance,** as if 'he' could touch fingers with the viewer. Additionally, the close personal portrait strategically reinforces the orientation of the gaze to the viewer and its demanding effects. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, pg.131), 'over-shoulder' objects with strong symbolic meanings, like the weapons, are usually

[43] *Tint* is the mixture of a color with white in order to increase lightness

[44] Shade is a mixture of a color with black in order to darken an image. 10. and 11 definitions retrieved from Art, Design and Visual Thinking at http://char.txa.cornell.edu/language/element/color/color.htm

integrated to a personal representation through a hand or a tool. In Fig. 3.1 we can see that the C.T. soldier's hand and arm are 'cutaways' to show the pistol, which seems the main pictorial element charged with symbolic attributes. In this way, it is an object which visually invokes the inviting promise of pleasure by firing.

Conversely, in the same image, the terrorist soldier is seen from far personal distance, that is, he is depicted head and waist up, and the rest of his torso blurs in the shadows. A sense of detachment from the viewer is created by subtle arrangements of other systems, like attitude, the degree of articulation of details and salience (realized by the compositional system). In this way, the T is depicted slightly smaller than the C.T. soldier, and in increasingly fuzzy dark *tones* that confound details and faint the view of rest of his body with the C.T. soldier at the right bottom corner of the screen. This visual arrangement in terms of social distance can be linked to salience and helps to emphasize the contrast of symbolic attributes created for T and CT soldiers (realized by the representational and compositional functions).

For the Menu and Logo, once again, the written block is seen as a whole; yet, realizations of the compositional system give salience to the Logo which is presented in first plane and suggests a commercial purpose for the cover.

3.3.4. Detachment as strategy to allow salience to CT's symbolic attributes.

The represented participants in the cover suggest attitude of detachment with the viewer. The C.T. force is depicted at the eye level angle, demanding the viewer's social response; yet, his body indicates little involvement with the viewer: his head, slightly twisted to his left, allows the viewer to have a frontal and lateral perspective of the helmet. Besides, his shoulder and left arm tend to his right side allowing the pistol to gain salience. On the other side, the T soldier shows slightly more involvement since his head is in quite frontal plane and his body would also be frontal plane, it were not for his left arm interposed between his chest and the viewer. In both cases, detachment is the strategy used to distance from the viewer and negotiate visual space to give salience to the T and CT's weapons and complete the visual act of persuading gamers to play.

Additional meanings can be realized regarding the angle from which the two participants have been depicted. The C.T. soldier on Fig. 3.1.would reflect relations of equality in relation to the viewer IF they

were not depicted in non frontal position. To be more specific, the eye level angle in which CT is depicted reinforces the demanding role of the gaze yet, suggests detachment in relation to the viewer who has not 'jumped into the magic circle' (Huizinga, 1938) of play yet.

Participants depicted from low angle are shown as if they were looking from higher position in relation to the viewer; this effect empowers the represented participant/s over the viewer. This effect is visible in CS especially inside the Menu where the T soldier seems to be accompanying the player through his setting of the game. In the cover, the T soldier does not look from an upper position; he just shows up to the viewer and displays his weapon.

3.3.5. Creating Hollywoodian war atmosphere through modality markers

Modality markers in the cover image cohere with the visuals of the whole game; this creates a visual identity for *CS1.6.* made of a *complex interplay of visual cues* (idem. 1996. pg. 167) In the cover, modalization occurs mainly via **symbolic representation of** war performances**, abstraction** of war locus, and **generalization of** their individual participants as alternative members of a sports team. In the game cover, action vectors abstract soldiers from painful landscapes of war accomplished by means of symbols **suggesting** the kind of pleasure the product offers to the *shooters'* market, and leaving it clear that it is just a game, the realisticness of wars on terror, its causes, methods or implications; via **generalization** of the kind of *action* that will take place in the game as well as subtle depiction of both [45]counterparts in the roles of protagonist and antagonist. In this way, the game, the commercial product, may result appealing enough to prospective users but not shocking, especially among players who live in countries involved in real wars and terrorism.

Details are articulated with the digital interplay of lights and shadows, and the arrangement of color differentiation and modulation create a blurring 'mood' for the first image. Moreover, those modality markers construe divergent meanings for the T. and CT forces, and the processes and circumstances in which they are involved. Regarding the

[45] Considering that both soldiers are contoured together and enlightened from their backs producing aura effect , and that one is depicted smaller, fuzzier and more distant to the viewer, paraphrasing George Orwell's famous quotation in Animal Farm, one could understand that WE ARE ALL HEROES, BUT SOME ARE BETTER HEORES THAN OTHERS.

degrees of articulation of details that run from maximum of details to the maximum of abstraction, in the cover image the representation of the C.T. soldier is higher modalized than the T. soldier. The focused expression in the C.T. gaze, the stunning head and eyes protection and glasses, the colorful insignia and the 'friendly' weapon are depicted in detail of color and form; meanwhile T's attributes tend to look homogenized by dark blue and olive green tones.

Degrees of articulation of the backgrounds are depicted in three levels running from no details depicted in plane dark blue at the deepest level to paint strokes in lighter blue depicted in an upper level. In the outward level, a yellow stain evokes a flash of light and multidirectional yellow lines suggest lights of laser rays and bridge the representation of the soldiers to the other elements. This realization of the backgrounds works in creating symbolic meanings: it represents that *action happens* reducing to zero the naturalistic and shocking information of what kind of action is symbolized, or by whom or where it is done. In doing so, the image of *war* action is strategically linked to video gaming through a visually pleasant setting instead of depicting soldiers in regular war actions like planting bombs, shooting, assassinating or rescuing hosts.

Degrees of modality (especially articulation of light and shadow) work in combination with other resources to create a 'mood' of blurred, not clear-cut action and, at the same time construe salience to the C.T. soldier and the demanding visual act that is the purpose of the cover. Both soldiers look enlightened by a 'flash' of light depicted at the top left quarter of the visual space. Yet, some few rays are depicted as reflexes of this 'flash' light, other rays look as if they were reflected from someplace up and out of the represented area, and others, from someplace left and out of the composition. Lighting from the forewords outlines only the C.T. soldier's attributes which carry symbolic meanings (like his gaze, his insignia and the head protection) and not his entire figure, as viewers would expect to see. This low modality seems articulated with the yellow line that contours both silhouettes and accomplishes the function of visually telling that both the C.T. and T soldiers are gathered as one in game action suggesting a visual 'WE'.

Variation of degrees of color modulation designed in the arrangement at the backgrounds has to do with the abstract coding orientations wherein the highly modulated blues from the background may represent a reduced depiction of conflicts in a complex world. In addition, an exaggeratedly textured red used to represent the C.T. soldier's polished head protector captures the attention of the viewer. In this case, the degrees of color modulation have two functions: firstly

they decrease the aggressive potential impact of intense red on the viewer; and secondly, degrees of color modulation used to represent the C.T. army's helmet depict it shinny, neat, flawless, all of them positive qualities highly valued in the military since they reflect discipline, masterly and professionalism. In opposition to that, degrees of color modulation used to portray the terrorist soldier are low, they range from dark olive to grayish dark olive, and from dark blue to grayish dark blue. His head protection (Fig. 3.1) is a simple dark olive mask, color modulated into yellowed olive. This creates an artificial effect of being enlightened by a flash resembling an explosion at his right, and exposes the T. soldier, symbolically, in low technological and skilful condition in relation to the C.T. soldier. Those meaning relations are also reinforced by lower degrees of color differentiation used to depict the T. soldier.

In the *C.S. 1.6* cover, high color differentiation can be noticed. They range among red, yellow, green, blue, brown, black and white. We have gray blues that dominate the composition and connote certain amount of constrained thoughtful calmness (Machin, 2007); and combined to the olive greens used to depict the soldiers' uniforms, associate the meaning values of the colors to military values of strength, care, protection, and strategic action. There is also emotional intensity indicated through contrastive interplays between the bright orange, blue, dark gray and brown used to highlight the elite's national insignia on his left strong arm. There is energetic vibrancy, depicted in different degrees of luminosity, and connoted by the arrangement among the greens, blues and yellows. There is also great degree of modulation of the red color used to highlight the C.T. head protection which, as discussed above, shines with somehow supernatural glow. And finally, peachy skin color is used to depict the participants' hands and visible eye zone, once again, special salience is given to the C.T. soldier who looks illuminated and obscures the gaze representation of the T. soldier.

Regarding the written block written in white verdana, as discussed in another section in this chapter, it shows high technological coding orientation, that is following the accurateness of the 'blueprint' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996. pg.170). Yet, the Logo in full yellow saturation is depicted in highest sensory coding orientation since, as discussed before, it pursues the aim of attracting the viewer while reflecting solidity, energetic action and certain toughness which represent positive attributes in the context of war as entertainment.

3.3.6. Audio and Sound effects creating meanings for war as entertainment in CS 1.6 cover

As stated before, I have decided to discuss the aural aspect of multimodality in the cover of the game only in what regards interpersonal meanings, in part, because the specificity of the medium has not found in Systemic Functional Linguistics the adequate tool for analysis (van Leeuwen, 1999) and that corresponds to the metafunctions produced by the visual and verbal languages.

In the introduction to the game sound and audio effects are used to reinforce the visual meanings in the cover of the game and create the 'mood' for CS. That is, sound and audio effects contribute in integrating visual and written messages and in announcing the kind of action the game elicits. Besides, they may orient players spatially through the map where they are playing as well as in relation to the other players' moves.

Firstly, overwhelming music accords multiply the feeling that something important is about to happen and reinforce the demanding visual act of joining game play; and secondly, the audio effect of a weapon been triggered accompanies the move of the mouse in the selection of any option available in the introduction to the game as if this ergodic effect had the function of calling gamers for playing a shooter game.

In CS multimodal cover, audio is highly modalized, developed to *imitatio naturae*. For instance, the representation of a sound of a firearm being triggered is heard as the mouse moves, and the game allows communication among players of the same team whether it is performed on the internet or on a small net. These effects increase a feeling of reality, group identity and engagement in 'real action'[46].

Regarding the sound, each map was made up with a different sound effect; for instance, in the introduction to the CS-rio map (a map which sets the game in the environment of a slum in Rio de Janeiro) the operator will listen to the sound of a Brazilian suburban crowded street and a *funk* song contributes to place the game in a poor neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro since, at the time, the map was made, the association of rap music with marginalized and aggrieved groups (Krims, 2003) was much stronger than it is now. The sound for this map was CS RIO RAP[47]. The message of the rap in the original version repeatedly

[46] In informal conversation with CS gamers, several teenagers reported that one of the reasons reason why they preferred to play CS was because they could communicate in game with gamers from other countries

[47] A copy of the letter of the original 'Rap do CS Rio' is available at Appendix 4 and at

positions gamers hegemonically from the perspective of terrorists who are pictured as drug dealers from the *commando vermelho* forces and this means that the subversive, the 'bad guys' for the established social order are represented in fact as the 'good guys' and heroes in game fiction. This rap was removed from the legal online game version and substituted for another rap sound (Mataleone, 2008) [48] after CS was banned for store sale in Brazil. Once again, an instance of glocalization, yet through aural language, works to construe the discourse of war for entertainment and relates sound with localized cultural identity by the insertion of a popular song which represents an agentive response from part of the CS gaming community.

Additionally to the relevance of sound discussed above and that relates creativity and modding with broader social context, sound is an ancillary element in CS game since the player can not be well oriented in game play without the use of an audio aid. The menu section sets the edits for audio to hear C.T. and T walking, running, crawling or speaking out and identify how close or how far the other player is, only depending on the memory available for sound in the operator's platform or the CP. Evidence of these was reported by a Brazilian professional CS player who was informally interviewed. In his words 'Ah! o som é super importante porque a gente pode- se orientar por onde vem o inimigo'(...) 'A trilha? Não, para mim só serve de enfeite'. His last declaration reflects that players can eventually be unaware of socially meaningful constructs (van Leeuwen, 1999) represented by sound and music in general and in VGs. in particular.

In any case, sound and audio effects seem to be outstanding elements of cohesion regarding theme and action in the game, and they can be used in learning contexts as examples of the role of aural resources in creating the mood for reading/ writing multimodal texts.

3.4. Arranging the iconography of war in the cover of VG. CS 1.6 through compositional metafunctions

Compositional function implies the agentive presence of the designer in choosing the better arrangement for the elements in a composition. Here we notice the 'fingers' of the designer and /or

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http://www.mp3tube.net/br/musics/Counter-Strike-Cs-Rio-Rap/125159/

[48] Mataleone, (2007) _is the mapper who designed CS-Rio mod and he runs the official servers site for Brazil.

production staff in selecting visual possibilities, and eventually, the 'voice' of the designer in the discourse of war as entertainment

Information **value**, **salience** and **framing** are the three systems that work together in organizing elements [49] from the experiential and interpersonal metafunctions and integrate them into a text.

Concerning the placement of participants in the visual space, as a tool for analysis we will divide the image (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) along an imaginary vertical axis, and relate the elements organized at the left with the **Given** information, and the elements organized at the right with **New** information, something we should pay attention to.

Fig. 3. 3 Left/ Right and Top/Bottom distribution of visual information associated with the Given/New, and Ideal/Real

The dividing line, the boundary (Ferreira, 2010) between the Given and New is formed by the CT's hand, his pistol and the blue effect from the background. In this way, the hand holding the pistol, part of the pistol, and the written block plus the Logo comprise the Given in the cover. They represent the given knowledge, the play condition. On the other side, the New information is represented by the figures of T. and C.T.'s heads and bodies posing at the right margin. In the cover, as discussed before, the yellow stain evokes explosion, and yellow action lines resemble laser rays and technology. Who the enemy is and what

[49]The compositional metafunction and the systems of meanings that it realizes were explained in the review of literature.

war actions actually happen were visually omitted in the cover, not certainly, attending to lack of space. Two possible explanations to these choices may be related to: firstly, the immediate purpose of the game wherein gamers have to play both C.T. and T. maps and the enemy is always 'the other team'; and a second possibility regards broader social contexts and the fact that VGs. as all cultural artifacts are produced in discourse; in doing so, symbols and the mood represented in the image encode meanings of (and somehow connect the gamer with) war for entertainment in times of terrorism, unknown enemies and tactics and real wars in the serious world.

There is also the possibility of looking at the Top/ Bottom[50] organization (Fig. 3.3) of the elements in the composition, where the yellow lines that cross the cover pararell from behind the soldiers are the dividing line between the Real and the Fictional. In this way, the yellow stain representing the circumstances[51] , C.T.'s helmet and the T's head and shoulders, hand and rifle and processes realized by both participants and circumstances co- work in representing that action, war action, is a game, that it happens in the terrain of the Ideal, and by association, in fictional fields. In doing so, the arrangement depicts a visual representation of war for entertainment.

3.4.1. Making meaning in the convergence of the Given/New and the Real/ Ideal

In the same left margin, at the bottom position, the written block with the Menu section gives the whole image, the connotation of a fictional event, a war/shooter game. The arrangement of elements weaves meanings of war for entertainment using visual recourses even for the layout of the written block. The Logo of the game is placed at the lowest position in the field of the Given and the Real. In doing so, it legitimizes the shooting action represented by the C.T. soldiers and relates it to gamic realm. In other words, what counts for real in this visual act is the gamic war action. Besides, the type letter used for the Logo translates feelings of resistance and expansion, and the saturated yellow appeals to color values related to gold and durability, yet the high degree of saturation pushes the viewer, once again, to the field of the Real relating colors to gamic (fictional) world. The bridge between

[50] These systems were already explained in Chapter 2 Review of Literature.
[51] As explained before, the circumstances are represented by the yellow stain that resembles an explosion and the blue brush strokes representing action and confusing environment

Real gamic realm and serious life realm in CS 1.6. is mostly realized during game performance where the avatar's weapon is represented at the bottom position in the screen; this specific design defines the generic category of first person shooters form other games and it strategically tries to minimize or at least to blur visual edges between, and somehow bridge, the gamic reality.

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Fig. 3. 4 Left/ Right and Top/Down distribution of visual

The placement of the representation of war as well as the representation of terrorism in the figure of the T. force semiotically divert the concepts of war and terrorism to far from the Real plane; and the visual information that represents war and terrorism in the fields of the Ideal, the fiction and play, create meanings for a playful war and at safe distance from the viewer, gamer or purchaser. In the relation Given/ New, which seems to follow the divine proportion[52], the representation of war and game are visually gathered as the Given; and the New is represented by potent cultural symbols that connote power and belonging, both made salient in the representation of the CT force

[52] It is an esthetic pattern of harmony related to the rule of the two thirds and the Phi number, it has applications in science, art and philosophy. For further reading on the subject, go to http://journals.cambridge.org

Other essential representations with symbolic connotation were located at **the top right quarter** of the cover; they visually reinforce the message of connecting Fiction to the T. force, his powerful weapon and war action. Regarding the weapon shown, it is placed in upwards position which conventionally conveys meanings of readiness for aggressive action; yet, aggressive messages are not displayed in the cover, to be more explicit, the message is modalized by showing the back of his hand holding half the rifle. In other words, the representation of the T soldier looks adequately challenging, but fictional enough for the purpose of the cover and to a western viewer; yet, the T. militia is represented increasingly dangerous as the game goes on: for instance: in the menu options, lists of weapons are displayed to be purchased with play money earned from killings of enemies. Additionally, weapons are programmed more lethal for the T. force than for the C.T's in several maps. This gives potential power and agency to the T. avatar as the player engages in the game and is allowed to use more accurate and 'safer' weapons.

Additionally, **the top right quarter** of the cover reveals stereotypical meanings for the T. force which are confirmed and reinforced by his representations in deeper layers[53] of the game. The mask that covers the T's face, the lack of head protection, the shape of his face under the mask that hides a beard and his fuzzy clothes are possessive attributes that suggest contrasting meanings with the representation of the C.T's force stunning red helmet and glasses[54]. Meanwhile the T looks as a common criminal appearing from dark confusing backgrounds, whereas the C.T. displays objects that connote meanings of technological superiority and a reliant force.

3.4.2. Giving Salience to symbols of war as entertainment in CS 1.6

In terms of compositional meanings, the principle 'first things first' does apply, too. In a visual arrangement, some elements are given salience over others through Size, **Color** contrast, Weight, Position on the planes and Perspective; besides, Salience of one element over another may connote symbolic meaning.

The cover of CS1.6 is arranged in planes where the 1st plane is for the menu and the Logo (that represents product to be sold, the

[53] To be more explicit, across the options from the Menu section from the introduction, and then, along gameplay

[54] C.T's helmet and glasses are placed at the bottommost (real) position of the quarter.

commodified entertainment); the 2nd plane is for the CT demanding social attention and showing his weapon; the 3rd. plane for the T arm and weapon; the 4th. plane is for the T soldier; and in 5th. plane is for the yellow stein and the pararell lines that create an atmosphere for the cover. It seems remarkable to notice that not only the naturalistic representation of war was abstracted from the cover, but also, the symbolic representation of what resembles an explosion, the yellow stain, is relegated to the last plane. War is the given the already known environment, what is made salient is the CT force and the potent cultural symbols that he carries.

As discussed above, different sizes between C.T. and T soldiers, the color contrasts in which they were represented, weight, their position on the planes and perspective in which they were depicted make the C.T. soldier the salient element of the composition. However, inside the game text, this difference in salience is diluted and the digitalized dolls tend to look more alike, in fact it is the skillfulness of the player in game that should give salience to her chosen avatar whatever the class it belongs.

The pistol in hands of the C.T. force (Fig.3.1) has salience through the compositional arrangement (it shares the center with the CT soldier's head) as well as for symbolic value that is given to weapons in societies that traditionally resolve geographical and economical international issues by means of armed conflicts and wars; in this sense weapons encapsulate meanings of dominance and power. Yet, the hands that hold the pistol look strong, and contrived hands, and they connote assertiveness, strength, care and thoughtful action; they are the CT hands. The rifle in the hands of the T soldier look like the base of a flagpole and the T posture denotes to be just showing up the weapon. Through deeper levels of the digital text, action by means of weapons implies in shooting action to kill or die. In any case, the points of the gun as well as the T's rifle are directed to the field of the Ideal and fictional world and they represents no harm in the discourse of war as entertainment.

In terms of typography, the cover image expresses the toughness of the C.T. and T. soldiers by the words COUNTER STRIKE written in bold and compact yellow that match with the yellow vectors at the background of the composition, and depicts an edge of dynamism which resembles visual identification with action and solidity. In the Menu, the functionality and toughness of the elite soldiers and actions are expressed typographically as explained above. Moreover, typeface seems to represents an additional way of communicating the playful

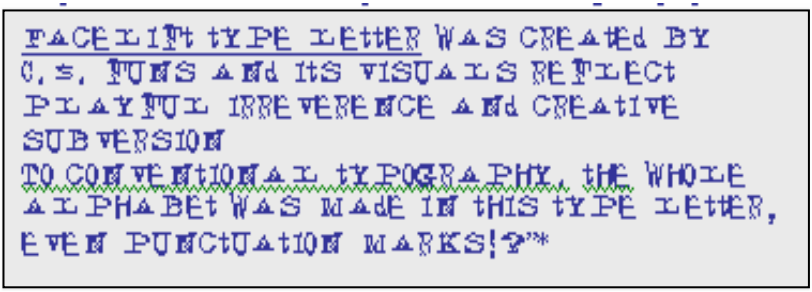

Fig. 3. 5 sample of facelift typeface, a typographic creation from CS natives

Spirit of some of CS nation members: in non official game sites, I found within the research, a program with the **facelift** typeface. This letter typeface, as it is illustrated in Fig. 3.5, was created for CS gamers, and it is now available for free use, it reflects creative subversion to the conventional orthography, irreverence and playful spirit.

Framing has to do with the representation of **frame lines** and borders **(**or their absence), **discontinuities of color** and **shape** or **white spaces** which serve to interconnect participants and other elements through the visuals. For instance, the absence of framing between elements represented in a visual composition stresses **group identity** (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996. p. 215) and its presence signifies **individuality** and **differentiation.** In the cover (Fig.3.1), both armies are represented as **belonging together**, they look gathered by a yellow 'light' that contours their silhouettes. Moreover, a yellow light enlightens both soldiers from their backs, besides the reflection of the light borders their silhouettes and gathers them as belonging to the same level of signification. In here, the setting gathers them and construes for them meaning of the heroic masculinity by an aura effect.

In the cover, the written section is integrated to the represented Participants and Circumstances signifying that they all stand for the same compositional purpose and re-enforces the visual act.

Regarding framing and the written section, it is integrated freely to the presented Participants and Circumstances signifying that they all stand for the same compositional purpose and this reinforces the visual act: the C.T. force invites viewers to play the war game Counter Strike. In this way, no frames neither discontinuities of color between the elements distress the composition nor divides elements among each other.

3.5. The ergodic nature of the written block in the cover

The front image of the cover looks like a still composition[55]; however, when this image is part of the game cover it displays its ergodic nature: after the click of a mouse on each indicator of the menu options, the image will open for the game's setting before play to visual, audio and discursive representations of possible narratives during the game performance.

Fig. 3. 6 in game actions for the avatars.

We can recognize different processes in this picture some of which are embedded to compose meanings for discourses of war as entertainment. Differently form other shooter games like America's *Army, Peace Maker* or *Global Conflict* that include negotiation as a possible play strategy to win the game, in CS all possible actions in game play aim at killing as the medium to accomplish the rounds even when bomb disarm is the final mission to win the game.

The fig.3.6 illustrates that the Menu options offers deep gamers a digital space to insert and mod in game war actions for the CT and T models. This figure also exemplifies the material war actions, and possible narratives, that CT and T avatars will perform, and that the purpose of cover to CS 1.6 is just to invite to war game.

Another example that configures discourse of war as entertainment regards the weapons that in the context of the cover represent the kind of game the CT invites to engage; yet in the Menu option, weapons represent a display of war technology available for T and CT forces as it can be noticed in the figure above on Fig. 3.7

[55] Multimodal composition refers to a text where visual, written and sometimes sound information are used to convey meanings.

Fig. 3. 7 Menu section to edit weapons buy menu option

3.6. Summary of the chapter

In this way, the three metafunctions co work in representing a whole message in the cover of CS1.6. Besides, the visual realizations discussed above unveil something about the ideology present in the representation of the cover which seems to be a continuum along the game. In this way, the difference in the details that identify the representation of CT from the T soldier suggest not only that the CT is the protagonist/ the war hero in the visual act of engaging players and costumers to the CS nation, but also that he belongs to an advantaged unit of powerful males, while the representation of the T armed man suggests that he is part of a generic antagonistic organization poorly equipped technologically, obscured by the symbolic connotation of low details, dark tones and fuzzy forms. Sound effects triggers the gamers' aural senses and prepares them for shooting action, while the Circumstances reinforce that the cover is about shooting action someplace, far from 'here'. Finally, the Menu written block and the Logo confirm that war and shooting action are gamic, that war in game is fun, it engages you, it empowers you. In South America it is said that a person 'speaks through her/his eyes' when s/he has vivid eye expression; according to the cover analysis, the demanding gaze of the CT soldier speaks up for himself and seems to call a: 'Come on, be a man and play Counter Strike'!!

In what follows, Table 2 summarizes the Menu of options in the introduction to the game CS 1.6.

Table 2 Summarized sample of the Introduction to CS1.6including the cover

Game Cover

- **New Game** >Create Server>Server>Map
  - > Cpu player options>arranging options for the Bot(name prefix, team, audio and weapons it can use)
    - > Options to chose a map to play –112 in here
    - > Options to start or cancel in solo play mode
- **Find Server**
- **Change Game**
- **Options**
  - **Multiplayer**>Setting the player's identification in game and visual resources to play (spray-paint, crosshair, weapon alignment, grenade smoke gas looks)
  - **Keyboard**> Space to insert keyboard edited play facilities: avatars' movement, communication, weapons, buy menu, diverse items and possible combat actions
  - **Mouse**> Options to adjust mouse and joystick use
  - **Audio**> Options to adjust and edit sound effects
  - **Video**> Options to adjust and edit technical aspects of video
  - **Voice**> Options to enable voice during game
  - **Lock**> Options to disable visuals *inappropriate for younger players*, available with password
- **Quit** > Options to cancel playing
- **Loading**> Starts local server
- **Select Team**> Selection from being an in-game observer; or from a menu, of either terrorist or counter terrorist forces avatars depicted in image and caption , or auto assigned model
- **Name of the game**

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Multimodal aspects of war as entertainment in the cover CS 1.6

I will retake some key aspects from the analyzed data and relate them to the representation of discourse of war as entertainment in the cover of CS 1.6 in order to answer more objectively the Research Questions that guided the present work.

Firstly, I will, very briefly contextualize the unit of analysis, and reorganize and discuss the data and relate it to the representation of modern war in war toys according to Machin and van Leeuwen (2009).

The cover of VG Counter Strike 1.6 illustrates the game in tournaments and web pages, present in the game box and in wall papers; in the gamic realm, it was designed to be seen on the computer screen, and it appears as the first page of the game. In this context, the cover welcomes gamers and invites them to the gamic experience and to set modes of play. Needless to say that, in the eagerness to start the game, most gamers do not pay attention to the figures in the cover; however, it is assumed among the gaming community that the image in this cover represents CS 1.6[56]. In a more general sense, the cover presents the game either for purchase or to engage play.

Two armed men, a yellow stein in an abstract setting, a written block with Menu options, and the Logo compose the cover. The participants in the cover are the two soldiers who do not look involved in material war action. They pose to the viewer and show the weapons that they hold firmly. The circumstances are represented by a yellow stein and pararell yellow lines, and they interplay a contrastive effect with the blue background. Explicit war action is omitted from the cover.

The written block with the Menu, in white verdana states clearly that it is all about a game; and the Logo, which is superimposed, shows that it is a commercial game.

Salience is given to one of the soldiers in terms of size, and light; he is depicted in first plane that highlights his focused gaze.

[56] I could confirm the popularity of the figures in the cover among boys and teenagers along the research and specially, during the SEPEX, the annual exhibit of scientific works at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina in 2008.

Intermodally[57], sound accompanies the game setting and contextualizes gamers' actions in war game context.

4.1.1. Soldiers (CT & T)

The T and CT are key participants in the iconography of modern as war as entertainment until now[58] since they are the agents of shooting action. In the analyzed material, the two soldiers are depicted in terms of what they 'are' and 'have' rather than in terms of what they 'do'. They pose in the role of Carriers of the symbolic attributes that they show. They display their war weapons, their insignias, their hand and head protectors which are conventionally associated to valor in armed conflict and class identity. The CT is depicted in first plane and he is given salience to in light and size. The viewer confirms that he represents the Counter Terrorist force later on by looking at the Menu section *Choose a class* where US and allied force soldiers are displayed wearing similar uniforms to that one with a red helmet in the cover. CT is depicted in stronger physical complexion[59] and in details. Considering the purpose of the cover, which is to present the game and engage the viewer to play, CT interacts to a visual 'you' by the effects of a dominant and focused gaze.

Dark tones of blues military green and low color saturation define the visual color identity for the cover (and the game). This pattern is also present in other war toys, and colorful items in the CT soldier signal their symbolic value.

Regarding the representation of the C.T., in the cover he looks more physically powerful, and closer to the viewer. His gaze is calm, focused, in a self confident expression and he addresses the viewer 'eye to eye' which discloses meanings of honesty and care. The colorful insignia that the CT soldier holds in his strong arm also carries symbolic value of belonging, not so to a national identity but to the CS nation of cyber sportsmen and CS game community, since the written block and logo and their position in the cover inform the viewer that in fact the

[57] I refer to the interactive creating o f meanings elicited by the aural mode of expression.
[58] I remind the reader that robotic toy like devices that have been introduced in modern war, in serious life, have not been added in the iconography of modern war yet.
[59] The physical superiority of CT depicted in the cover tends to equalize in deeper layers of the game where, besides, what counts for 'better' are the gamers' skills to play and not the models' views.

visual event concerns a Video Game[60]. In both, T. and CT forces, the Myth of physical, muscular strength is revigorized with the energy and might of powerful weapons. Strength is symbolic, a soldier is not just a soldier but a symbol of national strength (Newsinger, 1997) and a militia is not just a militia but a potential strong threat where gamers may recreate the fantasy of Peter Pan in Never land.

Concerning the representation of the T soldier, in the cover, he is not depicted as strong, as protected and close to the viewer as the CT.[61] The T. soldier addresses the viewer in a challenging gaze expression under the mask that hides his face and makes him look more like a criminal. Besides, the upward position of the weapon that he shows replicates the posture in which the media prefer to portray the violent insurgents visually. To sum up, stereotyped physical representation is assigned to the T soldier whose face is not visible; yet, the shape of his face depicts a beard under the head mask[62] and aligns terrorism to Muslim people who wear bear for religious reasons.

The difference in their uniforms also conveys symbolic meanings that connote technological superiority and military discipline for the CT soldier who shows neat and well equipped clothes.

Camouflage, another key feature in the representation of modern war (Machin & van Leeuwen, 2009), is only assigned to the T soldiers inside the Menu options. In the cover, T and CT soldiers wear one color clothes where little details are visible except for CT with his marked details in his neat uniform, which signal symbolic meanings. Conversely, the T. soldier's uniform looks rather improvised, and details of his clothes fade in the dark corner at the right of the image. Yet, in the Menu, the T. soldiers wear camouflage. T soldiers expose their muscled militarized bodies and represent to be fierce enemies, strong men that mimicry war environment much like wild animals would do in their jungles while the CT forces continue to look powerful and well

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[60] Inside the written block, where the purpose of the image is to display the models for the gamers to choose an avatar, rather than to address the viewer, C.T.'s display in alike well protected uniforms, and in covered faces. They stand fiercely, in posture of readiness to fire to an unknown target. They look like toy dolls in display, one of the kinds in green, blue and gray uniforms. Inside the game, when gamers impersonate CT and T avatars, they will contend by means of almost equal violent actions and dispute for the higher score and the community's recognition for operating gamic war strategies and assassinations.

[61] Yet, as the gamer goes deeper in the Menu, the representations tends to balance and Ts. display their muscular strength and powerful aggressive masculinity.

[62] This attributes is confirmed in the Menu section where it can be noticed that most T. model are depicted using beard or goatees.

protected from the environment; they are equipped in tough, safe, comfortable, and stained color uniforms that evoke knights in their amours.

Considering the assumed rules for the game CT players are meant to fight the 'terrorist evil doers' and both teams will have to play T and CT alternatively; that is, for the logic of the game, the enemy is the one that is not at the avatar's side.[63] The purpose of the cover is to welcome players to the game experience and not to intimidate the term with representations that evoke menacing feelings nor offensive messages of stereotypical preconception. For that reason, the enemy, in the cover, looks more like a darker and impoverished analogous representation of the counter force, however, not menacing. Yet, in the cover where T represents a tough, aggressive masculine coin side and CT the protective and self confident side of the coin, the enemy is 'the other' no matter the *skin* he impersonates nor the heroic or evil ordeals: the bad guy is the one who puts in danger 'my' victory in the round.

Acknowledging that the purpose of the image is to invite gamers to 'safe and playful' war experience, soldiers are abstracted from the representation of naturalistic war environments, and digitalized art representations evoke, in the context of the game, energetic and conflictive war action from the backgrounds.

4.1.2. Technology

Technology is a central feature of dominant discourse of contemporary warfare which conveys hegemonic superiority to U.S. Special Forces (Machin & Van Leeuwen, 2009) and allied soldiers; it is represented in subtle ways in the cover and more explicitly in the Menu options.

Technology, linked to Special Forces' superiority, is symbolized by the value of the attributes that CT force displays. In the cover, the stunning CT's helmet contrasts with the T's simple mask. It is bright, shinny, without imperfection, and it matches with the glimmery glasses and the leather gloves that protect CT's head and hands. They symbolize technological superiority, professional ability and power; and make the T. soldier look less protected and less reliant in simple head mask and

[63] I have come to this conclusion after reviewing rules to play diverse tournaments and found ways of playing where players should stick to one team (T. or CT); in others they had to play alternatively as T and CT; and finally, in other kind of competitions, players should not be part of any team, but fight alone against the other competitors and the winner (gamer) would be the one who killed the most.

clothes, and depicted; besides, his left shoulder and the rifle tube cut off the visual space of the cover. In this way, technology is not represented in favor of the T force in the cover, and when contrasted to the representation of CT force, his looks suggest the non professional status of an amateur or improviser, technologically diminished, and impoverished. The little protection on his head and hands also suggest improvisation and lack of technological war resources.

4.1.3. Weapons

Weapons carry intrinsic meanings of power, destruction and conquer: depicted in detail (or not) and with sophisticated technology, they are essential tools of the dominant discourse of contemporary warfare. In CS 1.6., as a FPS, game play is based in 'mortal' weapon combat, and the action is undergone by the player as if through the avatar's eyes; besides gamic actions (mostly shooting action) are operated by means of a keyboard, a joy stick or a mouse which bridges the player's hand to the weapon on the screen. Yet, in the cover of CS 1.6, the depiction of weapons does not seem to be related to the display of technology nor to violence, but to attend the purpose of the cover which is just to invite to play a war game, yet in so doing, the discourse of war **as** entertainment is reinforced. Inside the Menu, weapons and war equipment are represented accurately by the visuals (high modality); however, according to its naturalistic code orientation, they are low functionally modalized[64]. The possibility to choose among different formats and colors of hair cross[65] by clicking the mouse in the section Keyboard Options contributes to create a sense of low realism. Besides, more powerful[66] weapons are available for gamers playing as terrorists than the ones available for gamers playing as special counterterrorist forces[67], all this has been hidden behind the cover, right

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[64] In some versions, the avatar does not even need to pick up the weapon from the floor, it appears on his hand unexpectedly.

[65] Hair cross is the name given to the cross design of the gun's sight. Weapons are low functional modalized since, in the revised version, they drop and fade from the screen, or suddenly appear after being bought.

[66] To be more explicit, for powerful weapons, I mean more 'lethal' weapons, and as a consequence of that, weapons that are the tool to conquer victory in game and hierarchic position among gamers. The relation between weapons, power and being powerful is also designed and motivated by media as it was depicted in the article 'Quem tem as armas é rei' from PSWorld game's magazine.

[67] Along the research I could spot that this fact has obliged a re-creation of rules for the game: originally, players had to choose either the T or CT forces and play the same class all along

under the ergodic Menu. The interplay between serious life and gamic reality expands to out of the video game realm and into the CS gaming community: an emulation of the weapons market is available on the internet for English language users, and the price of weapons varies on the quantity 'bought' by internet gamers at the end of the day.

The yellow lines at the backs of the cover that suggest energetic laser rays in the context of a shooting war game, also represent advanced war technology assuming that wars of the past centuries would very improbably be represented or symbolized this way.

4.1.4. Modality

In social semiotics, the concept 'modality' focuses on the signifiers that signify as 'how real' a representation should be taken (van Leeuwen, 2006; Machin, 2007). Understanding those signifiers depends on the criterion to delimit 'what counts for real'[68]. What counts for real in the cover to CS 1.6 is gamic reality that is why I propose to see the cover through Technological code orientation and Sensory code orientation. The cover reinforces discourse of war as entertainment by high modality sensory code orientation where colors indicate that it is a war game and the fuzzy atmosphere indicates that what counts for real is the gamic reality. Technological coding orientation is applied in the cover as a whole where color, distance and angle co work to construe meanings for the purpose of the cover effectively.

In terms of the visuals, the fuzzy atmosphere is broken by contrastive saturation of colors that signal the symbolic objects or themes we have to pay attention to; they are carriers of some meaning that the message wants to communicate. In this way, the purpose of the image is transmitted by the interplay of those marked themes in the cover: the yellow stein, CT's stunning helmet and eyes' protector, his insignia, his pistol, and his focused gaze that demands social response.

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the rounds similarly to a football or basket ball team; then, as new game versions had more offensive weapons available for the terrorists classes than the counter terrorist forces, and they were approved by the gaming community, the game rules were modified into alternative rounds, 15 rounds playing as counter terrorist and 15 as terrorist in order to offer equal opportunities to players.

[68] Modality markers depict the square shape of the soldier's beard, or the brightness of CT gaze or how detailed and colored their uniforms are depicted.; and Coding orientation rules the logic, the criteria to parameter what counts for real

4.1.5. Sound

Sound contributes to create meanings with peculiar semiotic resources. Sound contextualizes discourse of war as entertainment by accompanying gamers, with audio effects, in their choices to start play as well as by presenting the game in the cover and then in the maps and other creations out of the game text like fan's machinima and videos. In this regard, sound situates the discourses of war as entertainment in wide range of arenas that go from public water pools or train stations that could be in almost any part of the world, to well defined situations and places like a slum in Rio de Janeiro or the people's strikes and claims in front of the presidential house in Buenos Aires. Additionally, sound and audio effects have the power to make discourse of war as entertainment sound like a Hollywood film where C.T. and T soldiers are the heroes from the representation of the cover.

Music accords multiply the feeling that some main event is about to happen and at the same time evoke Hollywoodian epics which may frame war in the semantic field of entertainment. Sounds create the context for the shooter game by repeating effects of a gun being triggered while the gamer chooses play options. Audio effects for play are set from the introduction, too. The following paragraph exemplifies how war as entertainment can be felt through the aural sense in a few seconds of playing action, recalling that audio accompanies gamic narratives and that in game moves are improvised by the gamers' more or less skilful shooting interplay:

> "(…) GOGO followed by the sound of running steps and a sequence of sounds resembling action. We hear a voice shouting FIRE then a burst of a machine gun fires, this is followed by a single shot that sounds more like a grenade launcher and again a call for FIRE, more running steps and revenging shooting followed by an AUGH! and the sound of a death weight smashed on the ground, then another, machine gun shots, more foot steps from my backs and finally, an AAH! More running foot steps running… GOGOGO (…) first round pitch ends.

Sounds activate the interactive representation of war and group belonging on the screen by audio representation of guns and machine gun shots, grenade's explosions; in addition, audio helps to recognize how far a foe is by the intensity of the footsteps, to receive leaders' commands and lately, to listen to the players own avatar's body smashing on the ground and dying. Regarding the sound in the mods, audio effects may contextualize the game in geographical and social environments.

4.1.6. Settings

In the cover of CS 1.6., persuasive discourse of war as entertainment is construed in part, by abstracting soldiers from naturalistic settings: no jungles, no explicit confrontation between enemies, no blood; yet action and conflictive environment are suggested visually and audibly by a yellow light flash that resembles an explosion and yellow ray- looking vectors that contrast with heavy blue brush strokes; and by means of audio effects of a weapon being triggered and sound accords which bring to memory familiar Hollywoodian's epics.

This artistic digital arrangement in the cover, more specifically in the setting (the circumstances) of the cover, builds discourse of war for entertainment where war is insinuated as a game, more precisely, as a shooter game, and the realisticness of wars and war on terror, their causes, methods, and implications on their participants are omitted. In game, the representation of war is also reduced to shooting action in different settings with the exception of some few maps inserted by independent mappers where the depiction of social discomfort was designed, too; CT and T are put to fight/ play shooter in well known cosmopolitan cities in the maps making evident the sociological phenomenon of glocalization (Robertson, 1995) in times of globalization. In the de_dust map, the official map played in international tournaments; settings are not particularly realistically depicted, as if they retained certain degree of unreality and fantasy modality, and thus confirm Machin and van Leeuwen's (2009) observation in this respect. However, in maps created by fans from different parts of the world, unrealistic fantasy modality is given, not by the graphic design, but by fuzzy atmosphere that can be seen since the cover of the game. The possibility of real setting looks, in these local maps, is given by the graphics and the depiction of historical situations. Examples of this are found in the maps CS-rio and CS-casa Rosada. In CS-rio map, C.T. soldiers counter attack terrorists in a Brazilian slum or favela; in an interview to the CS-rio modders[69], they reported that since the beginning of the CS 1.6. mod, there were only available maps to play in Italy, Iraq and Havana, and that Brazil deserved to have a map to play in, too; mappers added that there would not be a better place to depict cops and robbers game than a slum in Rio de Janeiro[70]. In CS-

[69] Retrieved from http://audiogame.wordpress.com/2008/01/30/entrevista-com-os-criadores-do-mapa-cs_rio

[70] The reason why the modders made a relation between caps and robbers and counter strikers and terrorists was not mentioned in the interview.

casa Rosada, a map played in Argentina, the counter strike forces fight terrorist militia who has occupied the presidential house and it is possible to see striking protests at the Plaza de Mayo from the presidential house balcony.

Settings, in any case, may differ in different ways but 'heroic masculinity' is omnipresent and indivisible: in the deeper pages of the Menu and during game: the models of CT and T soldiers are presented as one of the kind in the Menu as in a display of toys, and tend to remain the same looks and not to modify through the maps and versions, that is, (CT) US or allied forces and (T) militia in similar muscular complexion and symbolic strength are put to combat in different settings and made lively by gamers' skills.

The setting is represented by degrees of articulation of the backgrounds in three levels, running from plane dark blue at the deepest level to paint strokes in lighter blue depicted in an upper level; in the outward level, a yellow stain evokes a flash of light and yellow lines remind lights of laser rays or the trajectory of bullets; they bridge the representation of the soldiers to the other elements. This realization of the backgrounds works in weaving elements into a cohesive text.

To sum up, in the cover of 1.6., the setting in addition to sound effects, strategically represents that *action happens and it sounds fun* by reducing to zero naturalistic or shocking information about war, thus linking war to game through techno visual setting and familiar sound.

4.2. Focusing on the research Questions of this work

In what follows, I will retake the research questions that oriented this work and supported answers to understand how the discourse of war as entertainment is represented in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6.

More specifically:

1) What are the ideational meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?
2) What are the interpersonal meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?
3) What are the compositional meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

4.2.1. What are the ideational meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

The cover to CS 1.6 is a conceptual symbolic attributive image composed by two armed men, a yellow stein, a written block with Menu options, the Logo and an abstract setting. The main Participants in the cover are the two soldiers. They do not look involved in material war action, they pose to the viewer and show their weapons which they hold firmly.

The written block with the Menu, depicted in white verdana typeface, denotes that the cover refers to Gaming; and the Logo shows that it is a commercial game. They are secondary Participants.

The Circumstances are represented by a yellow stein and multidirectional yellow lines. They interplay contrastive effects with the blue background and suggest conflictive armed action in the context of a shooter game. Moreover, if we consider that the Participants are armed soldiers in the cover, Circumstances represent war action symbolically. Explicit depiction of war action is omitted and supplanted by an artistic arrangement that suggests technology and action.

The represented Participants are not involved in action processes; they are depicted in terms of their timeless essence, and in terms of the symbolic value of the attributes that they carry, and which are significant in the culture the game is directed to. Soldiers are depicted as Carriers of symbolic attributes: the (military) clothes; the head, hands and eyes protection; the insignia; the muscular complexion and the weapon that they display. Those attributes convey meaning value of symbolic physical strength, technological power and identity. Physical strength is mythical because in contemporary warfare, an army's strength relies on war technology (strategy and weapon resources) rather than on strong body complexion. Technological power is also symbolic because, beyond suggesting US and allied forces technological superiority in the cover, there are signals that gamic and fictional reality control serious life reality in the cover of the game. There are signs in the cover that identity aspects of the represented Participants linked to gender as being male members of a unique gamic community. This community enacts war akin to game and fiction and, at the same time, idealizes realities which are themselves problematic by presenting soldiers as heroes and by abstracting concepts of war from serious life realm.

4.2.2. What are the interpersonal meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

The cover of CS1.6, as well as most conceptual images, is mainly represented by visual relational processes, in other words, main participants are depicted in terms of what they 'are', 'have' or represent.

The CT force, in demanding eye contact, dominates the visual act and activates, in the viewer, the purpose of the cover which is to present the game and engage him to play or to buy the product. The CT image in the cover evokes empathy with the viewer with whom he relates by a self confident and honest gaze, and at a friendly distance. Meanings of determination, aggressive constrainment and care are positive qualities visually assigned for the CT that reinforce him as hero in the discourse of war as entertainment. The twisted CT posture, aiming at giving saliency to his weapon, suggests analog bellicose praised attitude of abdication of personal interests in favor of major military duties.

Challenging, the T force faces almost frontally the viewer, yet in third plane and at far personal distance. This posture and distance also contribute to achieve the purpose of the image: T force, in antagonistic relation to the CT force, challenges the viewer but does not threaten him, neither hurt feelings of prospective customers around the world regarding stereotyped representations of what is supposed to look like a terrorist.

Yet, other interactive meanings signal that what counts for real in the cover to CS 1.6 is gamic reality; for that reason I propose to see the cover through Technological code orientation and Sensory code orientation. The cover reinforces the aspect of US and allied country's technological supremacy in the representation of discourse of war as entertainment by the symbolic value assigned to the attributes of CT force such as the weapon –in upwards position, first plane, and depicted in details- and his stunning helmet – depicted in highly textured tones of red- and eyes protection. Assuming that meanings constructs are built in the culture of practice, the dark blues and olive military greens of the CT and T forces' clothes are highly modalized for sensory code orientation for colors. In this way, the color system co constructs discourse of war as entertainment.

Sound effects create a remarkable atmosphere for the game in the cover, and eventually, develop aural map environments situated in time and space.

Gamers' agency is optimized from the written options in the ergodic Menu edits; it achieves its interactive role when the gamer operates it to set the game or to insert actualizations.

The Logo matches in color, position and form with the yellow lines that cut the cover horizontally; they suggest overwhelming energy and quick action. The Logo written in yellow resembles gold and evokes durability and praised value.

4.2.3. What are the compositional meanings constructed in the game cover of Counter Strike 1.6?

Discourse of war as entertainment is in part, constructed by the placement of the Logo and Menu in the visual field of the Real; in doing so, they indicate that the event is about gamic reality. These meanings look reinforced by the placement of the T force at the top right corner of the visual space and which signals that T force –and terrorism- are situated in the fictional field. Besides, the arrangement for the background and the circumstances depict, in symbolized manner, that war action takes place in fictional terrains 'far away from here'. The arrangement for the setting completes meanings in the cover by indicating conflictive environment and explosion, yet no harmful war action. 'How could that be?' The cover suggests that in terrains of game, violence can empower operators and do no harm to winners or losers.

Moreover, the position in which CT and T weapons are depicted point to the Ideal and fictional field; in this way, armed men, in the discourse of war as entertainment, illustrate no harm but the empowerment conferred by the possession of lethal weapons. Yet, inside the game CS, like other first person shooter games, places shooting action from the bottom position; in doing so, the gamer aligns gamic killing actions in the field of the Real[71].

Salience of symbolic Themes in the cover is signaled by a subtle interplay of placement, size and color. In this way, the CT is arranged in 1st. plane sharing attention demanding with the weapon that he holds firmly. The posture of his body allows his gun to look pararell to his helmet, and the position of his head allows the helmet to be looked, simultaneously, from frontal and lateral perspectives. Besides, CT's

[71] To what extend a child's brain distinguishes between war action enacted in the Gamic reality and war action enacted in serious life ambience seems to be a gap for further multidisciplinary research.

insignia is made salient by high color saturation that contrasts with the blue leave of his uniform, and the drawing in the insignia does not represent any army in serious life, and thus aligns avatars to fictional terrains and make them look as belonging to the CS nation.

Discursive representation of war as entertainment reinforces meanings of male group identity through the interplay of framing and lights: a yellow contour that resembles lights from the backwards highlights and frames T and CT forces and their weapons. This arrangement brings out, under aura effects, visual constructs that link heroism to patterns of militarized masculinity.

4.3. Summary of this chapter

In this chapter I have focused on: 1) reviewing key aspects from the representation of contemporary discourse of war; 2) relating them to the representation of discourse of war as entertainment in the cover of CS 1.6; 3) re- posing the research questions and providing answers to each of the three Research Questions that guided this work.

CHAPTER V

5.1. FINAL REMARKS

In many cultures, some toys are taken as transitional objects through which children are able to practice their behavior and roles towards real things in the world. Cs 1.6 is not of the kind as its practice would not guarantee children and adolescent's roles as terrorist nor as antiterrorist soldiers, but that does not mean that this shooter game would not introduce young players to the values and situations in which they are growing up. It actually does. It conveys to the child, and reinforces to the adolescent praised attributes for certain kind of masculinity and masculine valor linked to romanticized war heroism constructed, in part, by other media. It provides its users with unrealistic messages of safe, playful and entertaining aspects of war, and that war as entertainment legitimizes violences practiced in digital medium.

The multimodal analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) resulted to be satisfactory for the purpose of the research and thus, with the discussions of the interplay among representational, interactive and compositional metafunctions (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) in the construction and mediation of discourses and values in contemporary multimodal texts, and especially in video games where, additionally, the transit through the game (text) presupposes ergodic readings and game's characters or avatars' impersonation and enactment

Regarding literacies and multimodality, I will add that as educators we should rethink what counts as previous knowledge for students and multimedia users who have grown up familiarized with computer information media and video games' practices. When I started this work, I intended to learn more about the role of language in multimodal texts like in video games. I hope to have contributed to the understanding of how meaning functions co work across visual, written and sound modes of expression in the cover of CS1.6. and that it inspires the inclusive critical use of rich multimodal content in VGs in multiliteracies practices even in non multimediated learning environments.

The current chapter closes this thesis by listing main findings derived form discussion in Chapters III and in Chapter IV, and signaling some possible pedagogical implications observed during the research. Now I proceed to identify limitations of the study and finally, make suggestions for further research.

5.1.1. Main findings

* In the cover of the game, the transition from a more symbolic and generic visual representation to a more explicit one puts in evidence the sociological phenomenon of glocalization (Robertson, 1995) in times of globalization as well as gamers' preferences to play, that is to transfer the playing experience to more familiar environments.

This feature opens a gap to the creation of other semi open source video games, and game editors that would allow students' creation of mods in learning environments as multimodal practice of contemporary electronic texts.

* The Menu and the Logo written in verdana simple typeface, designed for on screen viewing, represents technology in the computer era; it reflects reading changing tendencies in serious life, out of game environment, regarding the 'needs' to facilitate redability under pressure of quick action.

* Sound in the cover has proved to contextualize action and to de-contextualize it in order to manipulate the message sent by visual or other channels. In the game maps that show individualized cities, sound contextualizes the scene in terms of action, time and culture.

The sensibilization to possible uses of these effects can also be explored in adequate compositions of multimodal texts.

* Controversial values – e.g. praised value to the use of lethal weapons- attributed to represented participants in visual texts could promote material for critical learning, class discussion and multimodal and interdisciplinary activities in class environments with diverse media resources.

* The purpose of the cover seems to influence the choices made for the representational metafunctions. Yet, the main Themes in a visual composition result from the interplay of visual metafunctions. Besides, strings of meanings can be followed in the materiality of the visual text (e.g. *Salience* in CT who is in 1st. plane, his insignia depicted high *color saturation,* the *framing* line that contours T *and CT* forces and weapons which are *displayed* in *saliency,* and the *color value culturally assumed* for their olive green and grayish blue *cloths* signal the

underlying message of group identity of T and CT soldiers to the powerful and males' militarized CS nation).

5.1.2. Pedagogical implications

Given the increasing awareness of multimodal expression in our society and the needs to effectively include multimodally to what counts for literacies, I believe that I can point at least one main pedagogical implication besides the ones mentioned in the section above.

It regards the insight that video games offer the kind of text that allows pro-active readings across modes. The application of literacy across modes using the multimodal material in VGs could be an efficient tool to elicit cooperative activities that include discussion, visual reading and writing among students in processes of literacies, in diverse class environments and across disciplines.

Regarding language learning, I hope that this work will call attention to the importance of the role of the different modes working together and separately in construing meanings across cultures and according to the purpose of the text. Additionally, extending the implications of this work, already made material in moving images from games (and other multimediated texts) would facilitate the comprehension of concepts that seem far from the learner's concrete world, such as the semiotic work of language by means of 3 metafunctions that are performed simultaneously: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual metafunctions proposed in SFL and VGD.

This presupposes the need to better understand how meanings are structured interactively (Unsworth, 2001; Ferreira,2003; Heberle and Meurer, 2007) as well as the need of appropriation of metalanguage to describe, use and teach structures present in effective contemporary multimodal texts.

5.1.3. Suggestions for further research

The following topics may serve as possibilities of further research …

* Investigations of how discourse of war as entertainment disclosed in the cover unfolds across the introduction and the game as a whole text. This trend of investigation seeks to understand the influence of the (contextual) purpose of the cover in the definition of main discursive Themes created for the game;

* Investigation of what counts for real in the brain level when ‘reading’ a game presupposes embodiment of avatars, creation and enactment of gamic narratives and discourses inherent to gamic world;

* Systematization of the approximations between conventional text structures and game’s structures as a way to facilitate the comprehension of systemic functional grammar and multimodality while manipulating a medium already familiar to young learners;

* Research and development of teaching materials for teachers’ continued learning that would work with multimodal interdisciplinary communicational activities, and that would eventually include the potential meaning resources offered by video games;

* The development of text editors available for Portuguese native language school users that would facilitate accessibility to electronic multimodal literacies. This suggestion especially claims the cooperative work with interdisciplinary expertise.

My objective in doing the present work was to contribute to the understanding of how multimodal functions construe meaning in VGs. I believe that I have brought about some insights to continue discussions regarding how multimodal meanings are processed in the text, their discursive relation with broader social spheres, the role of language in reinforcing given social values and enabling social change (Fairclough, 1989). What may be done now is to investigate learning multimodal environments foreseeing the creation of learning activities and critical mass of examples that include video games as a resource for critical multimodal learning and that will draw more substantive and grounded conclusions in this regard. The mission is motivating and comprehensive since ‘electronic game narratives are not simply useful, but in fact imperative as a resource for literacy and literary development in today’s classrooms’ (Unsworth, 2009, p.135).

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Appendix 1

The following electronic addresses will allow the reader to have access to multimodal History of Video Games:

1.1. 'Tennis for two' (LynxGriffin, 2007) retrieved from http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=UZZT4n1fzG8&NR=1

1.2. 'Play Ping-Pong Video Game' (Baer; Harrison,1969) retrieved from http://br.youtube.com/watch?v=1LsRGUODHlQ

1.3. 'Video Game History' (Kajayacht,2007) retrieved from http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=oUYhD1J2b_U

1.4. 'Top 10 Atari. NES, Genesis, Supernes, PSX e PS2' (Demysbrito, 2007) retrieved from http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=I8XDhfnk63k

Appendix 2

Transcription of the Menu

Setting the game

NEW GAME

Create Server…>Server…>Map >
♣ options of available maps according to each version
>Include CPU players (bots) in the game
> ♣Number of CPU players
> Difficulty > Easy >Normal>Hard>Expert

Create Server …>Cpu player options…
> .♣ Bot Name Prefix
> Bots join Team …> Random > Terrorist > Counter T.
> Bots Radio Chatte > Normal > Standard > Minimal > Off
> Bots can use…> Pistols >Shotguns >Submachine guns >Rifles> Machine guns> Grenades > >Sniper Rifles >Shields

Start
Cancel

FIND SERVER

CHANGE GAME > As it is a mod, Cs uses engine of Half Life to work, and the source game is available for play.

OPTIONS

Options> Multiplayer> ♣ Player name
> Spraypaint image and name > Lambda> 8ball1 >andre >camp1 >chick1 >chuckskull >devl 1 >gun 1 >skul >smiley >splatt >tiki >V_1

♣Spray-paint image color > Orange >Yellow >Blue >Ltblue > Green >Red
♣Crosshair appearance > Auto size > Small >Medium > Large>Ltblue >Green

Yellow>Red> Blue
♣Translucent> Advanced >
♣ Time before dead bodies disappear
> Multiplayer decal limit
> Max shells
> Max smoke puffs
> Smoke gas grenade sprite quality> best looking
>slowest

♣Weapon alignment> Right handed
> left handed
♣ Buy menu type
> VGUI menus >
> Automatically switch to picked up weapons (if more powerful)
> Center player names
> Auto help

Options> Keyboard

♣ Options> Keyboard.> Movement> Edit key options> Move forward. Move back, turn left, turn right, move left (strafe), move right (strafe), walk, jump, duck, swim up, swim down, look up, look down, reset view, strafe modifier, mouse lock, keyboard lock

♣ Communication> Edit key option> Use voice communication, standard radio messages, group radio messages, report radio messages, active in-game GUI, chat message, team message

♣ Menu> Edit key option> Buy menu (primary and secondary ammo, equipment) glock 18 select fire, HK USP. 45 tactical, Sig Sawer P228, Desert Eagle Calibre 0.50, Dual Berreta/ Five- Seven, HK MP5- Navy, Steyr TMP, Ingram Mac-10, FNP 90, HK UMP 45, Bennelli M3 Super 90, Bennelli XM1014, Colt M411/AK47, Styr AUG/ Sig SC- 552 Commando, GALIL/Famas, Seyr Scout, Arctic AWP, Sig 56550 commando, HKG 3?sc-1, FN M249 PARA, Kit de desamorcage, Grenade Avenglante, Grenade Fumigene, ECO + KEVLAR + munitions, KEVLAR + colt + MHAY, AK-47 + munitions, KEVLAR + DESERT EAGLE +munitions.

♣ Automatically buy equipment, re-buy previous equipment , select team and items from menu, display multiplayer scores, recap mission briefing

♣Combat> Edit key option> Fire, Weapon special function, reload weapon, previous weapon, next weapon, last weapon used, turn night vision on /off, drop current weapon

♣ Miscellaneous> Edit key option> Use items (buttons, scientists,…) >flashlight, spray logo, take screen shot, cheer, quit game

♣Options> Mouse> Reverse mouse (reverse mouse up-down axis)
> Mouse look (use the mouse to look around)
> Mouse filter (smooth out mouse movement)
> Joystick (enable the joystick)
> Auto Aim Aims at enemies automatically
Mouse sensitivity…a bar running from 1.00 to 20.00

♣Options> Audio> Sound effects volume bar
> Sound quality >high> low
> Enable EAX Hardware Support
> Enable A3D Hardware Support
> MP3 volume bar
Additional note: MPEG Layer-3 playback supplied with the Miles Sound /System from RAD Game tools, Inc.MPEG Layer -3 audio comprehension technology licensed by Fraunhofer IIS and THOMSON multimedia

♣Options> Video> Renderer,
> Display Mode,
> Resolution,
> Color quality,
> Run in a window,
Video brightness bar
Video gamma bar

♣Options> Voice> Enable voice in this game
Voice transmit volume bar
Voice receive volume bar
Test microphone
Boost microphone game
Note: Uses Miles Sound System. Copyright ©1991-2001 by RAD Game Tools, Inc.
♣Options> Lock> ♣Content lock
PRESS this button and enter password to disable visuals inappropriate for younger players

QUIT

Quit Game> Do you wish to stop playing now?

> Quit game, cancel

Loading> start local game server

Counter Strike: You ar playing Counter Strike v 1.6
Visit the official CS web site @
www.counter-strike.net
visit Counter Strike.net (direct link with the official web site)
> Option OK

SELECT TEAM

1. Terrorist forces>Phoenix connex> Elite Crew> Arctic Avengers>
   >Guerrilla Warfare > Auto- Select
2. CT forces> Seal Team 6 >GSG-9> SAS> GIGN> Auto Select
5. Auto assign
6. Spectate

Note: Mapa integrante Pack com 112 mapas,
Pack mapas exclusivos para Counter Strike 1.6,
Com seus respectivos BOTs.

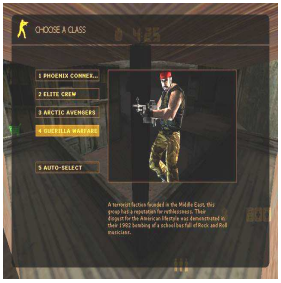
Este Pack se usado para Counter Strike
1.5, (sic) nao tera os BOTs.

Os mapas contidos neste Pack de
Mapas, foram todos coletados na internet.

Pack com 112 mapas
By PirocaHP- .:>>F!N4LShare <<.

Appendix 3

CHOSSE A CLASS from the CT or T forces



Appendix 4

CS RIO RAP

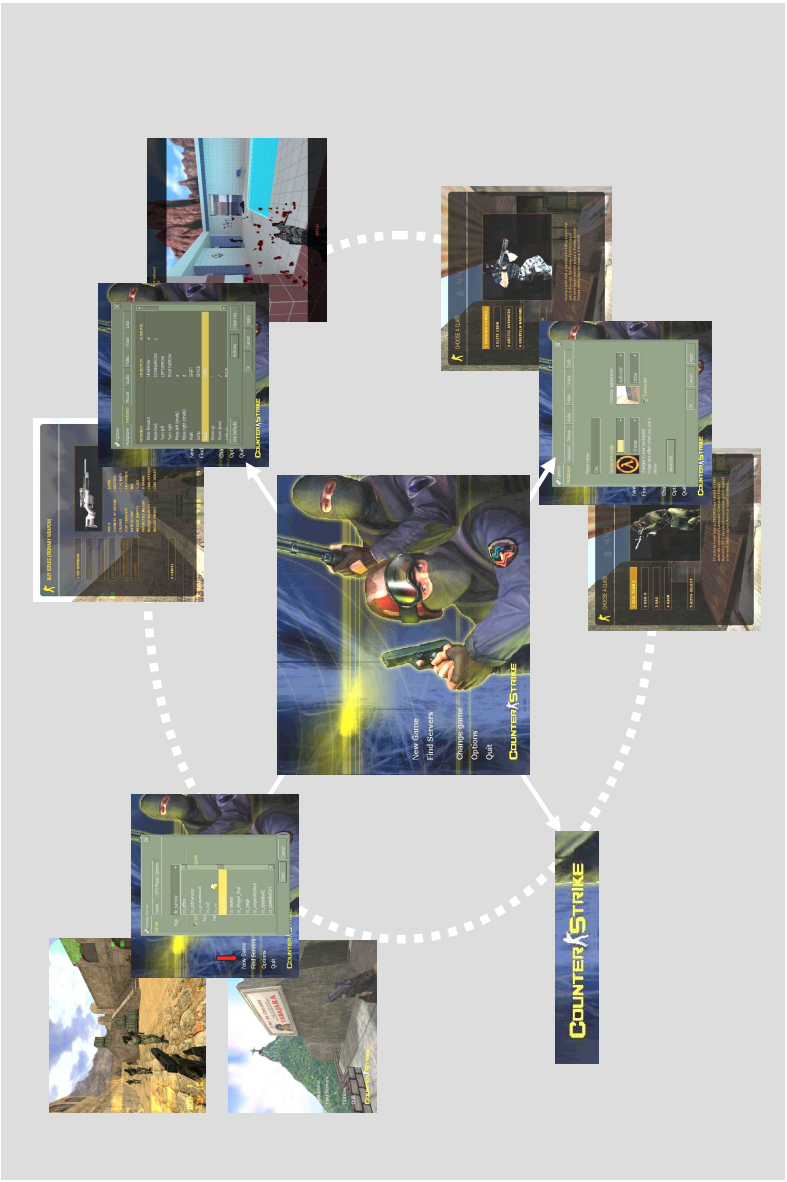
Sound in the CS rio map, as discussed in this work, contextualizes the map in a local and social reality of a slum in Rio, in the real life, before the Brazilian security forces would occupy the communities under the domination of drug gangs. In the map, a rap sounds with the lyric that follows.

E os terceiros vão descendo a ladeira
Levando tiro pela frente pelas costas
E o comando traficando a noite inteira
Que coisa linda que coisa maravilhosa
E os terceiro tão de brincadeira
E eles querem invadir o morrão
Mas eu dou tiro na cabeça, na cintura
Também dou tiro na bunda dos terceiro vacilão
E os terceiro bando de filha da puta
Um bando de sangue-suga
São um bando de cuzão
E os X9 tão de brincadeira
E eles querem trazer esfolação
Mas eu dou tiro na cabeça, na cintura
Também dou tiro na bunda dos X9[72] vacilão
E os X9 bando de filha da puta
Um bando de sangue-suga
São um bando de cuzão
Terceiro dão o que?
Dão a bunda!
E os X9 são o que?
Filha da puta!
E os terceiro são o que?
FIlha da puta!
E os X9 dão o que?
Dão a bunda...

[72] X9 are the police informants

Appendix 5

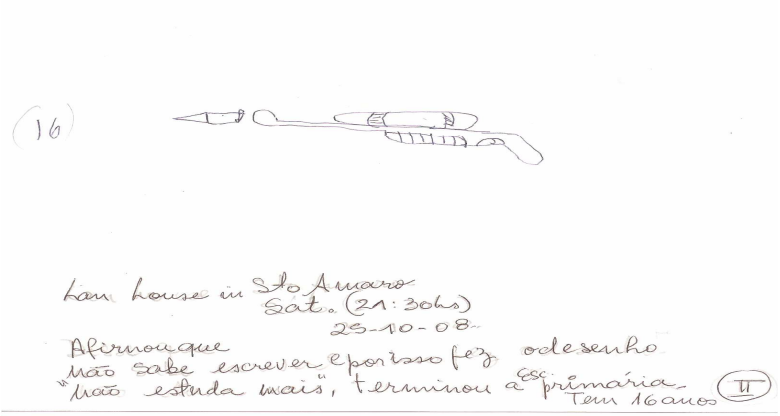
Main themes in the cover unfold along the game



Appendix 6

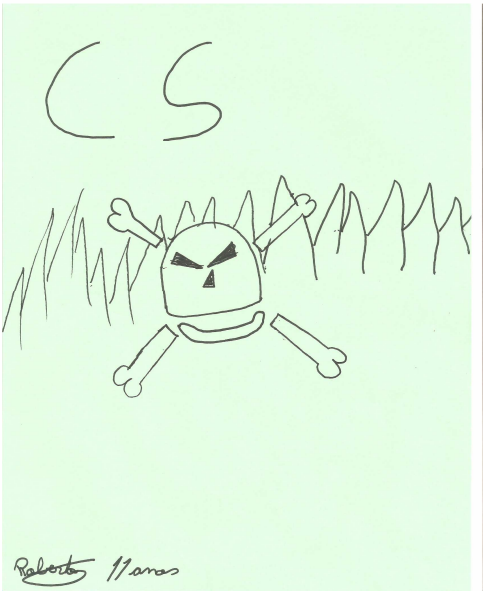
These are some multimodal answers obtained to the question:

Why do you like counter Strike?



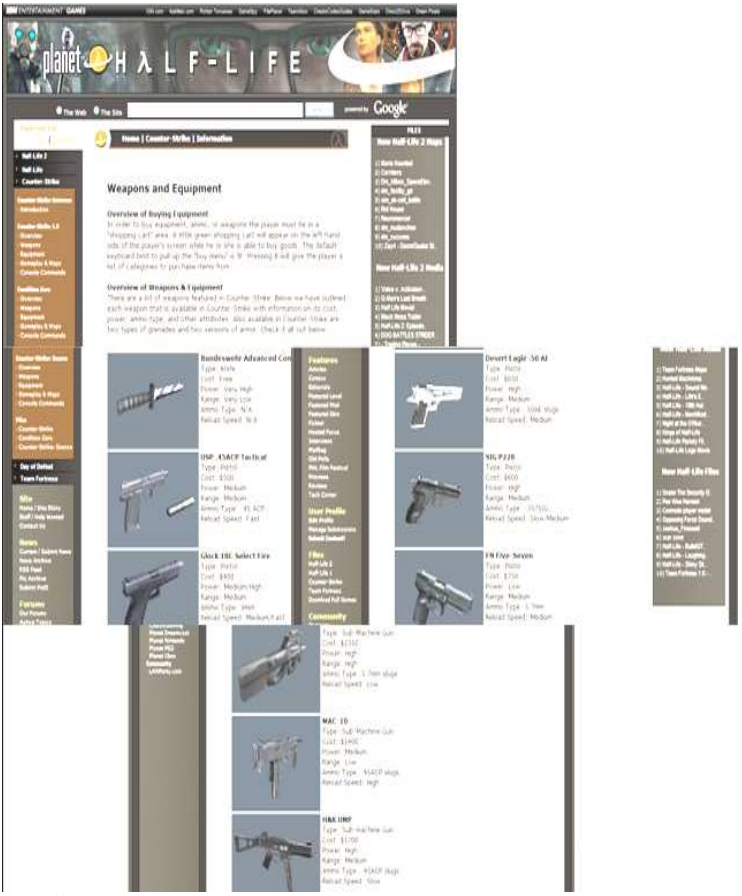
Counter - Strike ~~é legal matar~~ porque tem missão
GTA - Porque da de onda de carro
Halbo - porque conhece gente

11 anos.



Appendix 7

Magazines and sites co-construing an identity for CS



Site that offers reveniews and Menu to buy play weapons http://planethalflife.gamespy.com/cs/

Velvet-Strike, an online protest modification where players and modders can use to subvert the normally violent Counter-Strike game. Read More at http://www.wired.com/gaming/gamingreviews/news/2002/06/52894#ixzz16UgzCNYK

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(http://www.livrosgratis.com.br)

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Baixar livros de Meio Ambiente
Baixar livros de Meteorologia
Baixar Monografias e TCC
Baixar livros Multidisciplinar
Baixar livros de Música
Baixar livros de Psicologia
Baixar livros de Química
Baixar livros de Saúde Coletiva
Baixar livros de Serviço Social
Baixar livros de Sociologia
Baixar livros de Teologia
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