

Paradata

What is Paradata?

In creating the concept of the STEM Exchange, we needed to distinguish between traditional, relatively static metadata that describes a digital learning object and the dynamic information about digital learning objects that is generated as they are used, reused, adapted, contextualized, favorited, tweeted, retweeted, shared, and all the other social media style ways in which educational users interact with resources. In this context, paradata captures the user activity related to the resource that helps to elucidate its potential educational utility. We first presented paradata at a March 3, 2010 presentation as...

Paradata...

- a complement to metadata, not a replacement
- separate layer of information from metadata
- a means to automate information generation about resource use by using social networking tools
- a means to create an open source and open access data space around resources
- emphasizes dissemination rather than description
- accommodates expert and user-generated knowledge

Paradata opens opportunities to...

- visualize a resource at the center of its own social-style network of activity
- explicate usage patterns and inferred utility of resources
- map network connections as teacher communities add multidirectional flows of information
- create persistent, short references to resources
- aggregate activity around the resource through user-friendly practices, such as hashtagging
- power feedback loops with teacher communities