

# Outlook of the game acceptance and application in the animation, Wreck-It Ralph - Focusing on Intermediality relation -

Yong-Seob Lim

Professor, Dept. of Cartoon & Animation, Sehan University

## 애니메이션 <주먹왕 랄프>에서 게임의 수용과 적용양상 - 상호매체성 관계를 중심으로 -

임용섭

세한대학교 만화애니메이션학과, 조교수

**Abstract** Wreck-it Ralph is the new genre of animation combining with totally different media, games. Hence, how the game, Fix it Felix, Jr. was digested in the animation to interact each other was reviewed in this article. Upon the review, Wreck-it Ralph did not refer to the images and narration structure of Fix it Felix, Jr. but to the specific motives of the game, which is referring to Intermedial individuals in making Intermedial relations. Wreck-it Ralph is the first animation to refer to the motives of the game and have the Intermedial relation with animation. In addition, it has the meanings enough to be analyzed, so we reviewed its Intermedial relation with Rajewsky's analysis frame in this article.

**Key Words** : Intermediality, Rajewsky, Medial combination, Medial conversion, Intermedial relationship matching, intermedial individual reference

요 약 애니메이션 <주먹왕 랄프>는 게임이 상이한 매체인 애니메이션과 혼합되어 새로운 장르의 애니메이션으로 변모된 작품이다. 그래서 본고에서는 게임<다고쳐 펠릭스>가 어떻게 애니메이션으로 녹아들어 상호작용을 하고 있는가를 살펴보았다. 살펴본 결과 애니메이션 <주먹왕 랄프>는 <다고쳐 펠릭스>에 담고 있는 이미지와 서사구조를 인용하지 않고, 게임의 특정모티프만을 인용함으로써 상호매체적 관계맺기단계에서 '상호매체적 개별체참조'에 해당됨을 알 수 있었다.

<주먹왕 랄프>는 게임에서 모티프만을 인용하여 애니메이션과 상호매체성 관계를 갖는 최초의 애니메이션이며, 분석할만한 의미를 가지고 있었기 때문에 본고에서는 상호매체성 관계를 라예브스키의 분석틀에 의해 분석하였다.

주제어 : 상호매체성, 라예브스키, 매체조합, 매체변환, 상호매체적 관계맺기, 상호매체적 개별체 참조

\* This paper was supported by the Sehan University Research Fund in 2016.

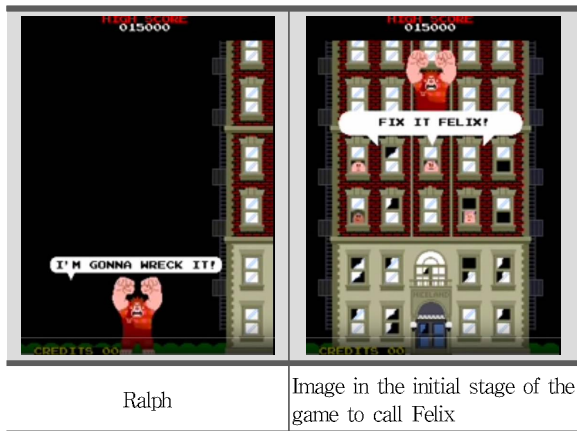
Received 6 June 2016, Revised 1 July 2016  
Accepted 20 July 2016, Published 28 July 2016  
Corresponding Author : Yong-Seob Lim  
(Dept. of Cartoon & Animation, Sehan University)  
Email: alysart2@sehan.ac.kr

ISSN: 1738-1916

© The Society of Digital Policy & Management. All rights reserved. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0>), which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

# 1. Introduction

Animation, Wreck-it Ralph (2012), was originally derived from the game character with 8bit pixel which has been known as Fix-it Felix, Jr. (1983) by Tobikomi Co. Japan [Fig. 1].



[Fig. 1] A scene of game, Fix-it Felix, Jr.

The mission of this game is for Felix to fix the demolished building by Ralph who is an antagonist of protagonist Felix. However, the antagonist Ralph wants to be the good character feeling skepticism on the villain's role in this animation. Also, as we can understand the different contents from the original one in the English title, we can estimate the intention of this animation by the expression of causative verb to be transferred, together with the names of protagonist and antagonist characters <Table 1>.

<Table 1> Relation of titles transferring from Fix-it Felix, Jr. to Wreck-it Ralph

<Fix-it Felix, Jr.> ⇔ <Wreck-it Ralph>
--

In this animation, various characters from the other games appear which demonstrates the trial of the interest inducing from the consumers by applying

various game characters through the game, Fix-it Felix, Jr. Therefore, this article is to investigate the intermediality relation which appears by overcoming the limitation of the single media through intermedial relationship matching from the combinations of different games and animations to be converted into the new genre animation[3].

# 2. Intermediality

A media is what that intervenes among the differences of senses, concept, interaction and so on to transfer or exchange the meanings. Sybille Kramer compared the role of this media to be like a messenger to connect this world and the next world. That means, the media is the asymmetric existence among nothings[9]. Hence, we will look for Intermediality relation between the games of Fix-it Felix, Jr. and Wreck-it Ralph, which are the games to be communicated as the roles of this media, in this chapter. First, we will investigate what kind of concept Intermediality has, and secondly review Intermediality relation theory by Rajewsky which is the analysis frame of this article by typology of Intermediality.

## 2.1 Concept of Intermediality

Referring to the different texts with one is called as inter-textuality. Interaction is appeared in the arts, and so on like the text in the literatures. Mikhail Bakhtin called the interaction among the differences in these media as heteroglossia[7].

In addition, a variety of Intermediality among different media can be considered as to try to escape from Narcissistic sense that has the limitation of the single media, as Herbert Marshall McLuhan proposed[4].

Converting into new media by combination of game images with animations which have different media is classified within the category of Intermediality relation theory.

Intermediality can be expressed variously as plurimediality, infra-mediality, cross-mediality, media-convergence, media-fusion, multi-mediality, and hybridization. Rajewsky, I. O. "Intermediality, intertextuality, and remediation: A literary perspective on intermediality. *Intermédialités: Histoire et théorie des arts, des lettres et des techniques* Intermediality[2, 3].

## 2.2 Typology of Intermediality

Rajewskij classified Intermediality with three typologies including medial combination, media conversion, and intermedial relationship matching as the symbols and processes.

First, the medial combination stage has the characteristics to identify each media from the different combination. These characteristics can be found in the combinations of sound installations related to images, opera, and computers. Second, media conversion means that single media is converted into the other media with different characteristics. Third, intermedial relationship matching is the stage to investigate the symbolizing process in the narrower range than the stages of medial combination and media conversion.

Intermedial relationship matching is classified mainly as intermedial system reference and intermedial individual reference. Intermedial system reference means to implicate and nudge something based on the original system, and it can be sub-classified as direct or indirect system mention after discrimination as the system revitalization. In addition, intermedial individual reference is not based on the original system but implicates and nudges the original only with motive[2, 5].

## 3. Intermediality relation between the games of Fix-it Felix, Jr. and Wreck-it Ralph

### 3.1 Narration structure of the animation

Ralph has the dissatisfaction that he plays as the

villain character. His dissatisfaction is from the behaviors of the other characters in the game. The other characters praise only Felix all the time that he does the right things to repair the buildings which Ralph has destroyed and broken down for 30 years, and they ignore Ralph. Also Ralph goes to the Felix's party place so as to get along with them, however, everyone shows inhospitality. This seems that they will accept Ralph as a friend if he won the medal. In this regard, Ralph makes up his mind to have the medal to be accepted by the other characters. Luckily, he meets the character that appears in the combat game, Hero's Duty, and he participates in the combat game putting on the military uniform of the character after many complications. Finally, Ralph acquires the medal from the combat game, but he misses his step mistakenly so as to be transferred to the other game which is Sugar Rush. Sugar Rush is the city consisting of the sugar as the main ingredient of all the background and the objects. Yet, Ralph drops the medal carelessly on the candy tree over the well with sugar syrup. In this difficult situation, Ralph meets the girl character of Sugar Rush, Vanellope, by chance. Vanellope should acquire the gold coin in the game of Sugar Rush, however, she can participate in the car race, and she runs away with Ralph's medal since the gold medal that Ralph dropped was similar to the gold coin. Ralph runs after Vanellope but she is already far away. In addition, Vanellope participates in the car race, but she drops out in the race because what she brings is not for the gold coin for that race resulting in the embarrassing situation. Though Ralph helps Vanellope in this situation, he builds the friendship with her after many complications (ellipsis). King Candy in Sugar Rush game is the transformed character, Turbo, in the car game, Turbo Time which was the popular game in the past, and he takes the throne from Vanellope who is the actual character of this game. This King Candy judges that his game was disappeared because of the main characters of all the games and has the grudge

against all the game characters.

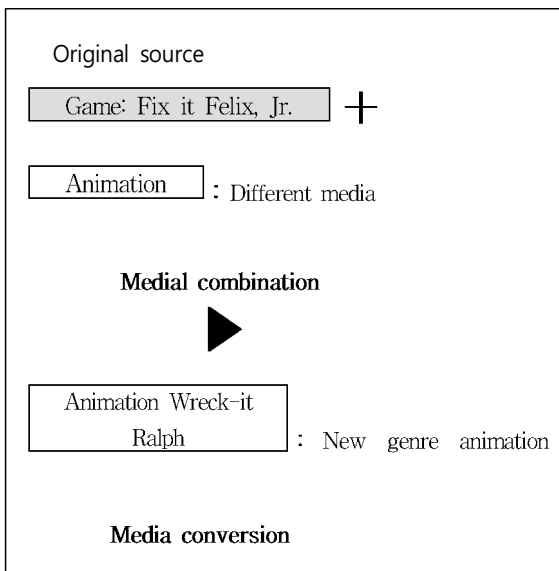
In the meantime, Fix it Felix, Jr. has been placed for the game device itself to be about to be disappeared considering out of order because Ralph was disappeared to be mixed up. So Felix comes out of this game to relieve from this difficulty and goes to find Ralph together with Private 1stClassCalhoun.

During this course, Vanellope wins the car race to recover her throne. Then, she accumulates the friendship with Ralph more and Felix goes to Ralph to resolve all the missing emotions and misunderstandings returning to the original state.

### 3.2 Analysis of Intermediality relation in the images of 'games and animations'

As seen in <Table 2>, Wreck-it Ralph is the contents to make medial combination with game and animation, and media conversion to new genre animation. On the other hand, this animation does not simply have the system to be described based on the original characters and contents in Fix-it Felix, Jr.

<Table 2> Process of medial combination and media conversion with game and animation



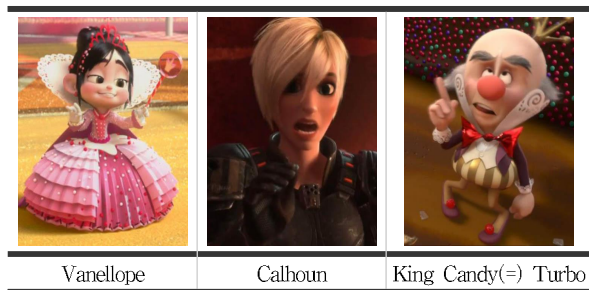
In Wreck-it Ralph, not only the characters of the original game but also protagonists or antagonists in other games appear. With respect to the narration structure, it leads to turn over the contents paying attention to the antagonist of Felix that is Ralph rather than the protagonist, Felix, unlike the original game. Interestingly, well-known protagonists appear while it is initiated from the meeting with Ralph and the antagonist in the other game. For example, they are Zangief and Bison which are the characters of the video game, Street Fighter 2 (1991) and Clyde that is yellow ghost in Pac-Man (1980). Clyde is the character that dawdles staying for a long time in the box of Pac-Man game. With reflection of the tendency for this character, Clyde's character is reminded by producing the scene that it does not come out of the box until Ralph takes the cherry in Wreck-it Ralph [Fig. 2]. Beside these antagonist characters, a variety of existing game characters are exposed like Sonic (1994) that is the protagonist character.

Game	Animation	Name
		Zangief
		Bison
		Clyde
		Sonic

[Fig. 2] Actual game characters in Wreck-it Ralph

Although it shows the interesting elements by evoking various games using the motives with the

existing game images, virtual games and characters appear to help the narrative structure of the animation like Vanellope in Sugar Rush, Private 1st Class Calhoun in Hero's Duty, and Turbo and King Candy in Turbo Time [Fig. 2].



[Fig. 3] Virtual game characters in Wreck-it Ralph

By introducing virtual as well as existing game characters into the animation, Wreck-it Ralph induces the interaction with the users not to recognize the difference between the actual and virtual games.

<Table 3> Making interactive relation in Wreck-it Ralph Digital

<b>Fix it Felix, Jr. and introducing motives of the existing game characters</b>	: referring to Intermedial individuals  Do not refer to the system of the original source. (Emptiness of the original source)	
Animationization of narration and visual media (Media conversion) ↓	↓	
<b>In Wreck-it Ralph,</b> 1) Form game characters, Ralph and Felix 2) Ralph demolishes the buildings and Felix fixes them.	⇒ Free from the concept of existing story. Remind of Fix it Felix, Jr.	<b>Fix it Felix, Jr.</b>

As seen in <Table 3> to look at the steps of Intermedial relationship matching, emptiness of the original source is appeared not to refer to the system of the original source by narration of Fix it Felix, Jr. and making animation of visual media. That is, it refers to Intermedial individuals of Wreck-it Ralph and the positions of the protagonist Felix and the antagonist

Ralph, which appears in the narrative structure in the original source, are switched resulting in the vague boundaries of both characters' roles. However, in the vagueness of boundaries for both characters, the role of Felix as to fix it and that of Ralph as to demolish are not changed which can remind of the images of the original source by the features of both 8-bit game characters. As we have reviewed, Wreck-it Ralph is a very creative animation not based on the narration system and the images of the original source, Fix it Felix, Jr., but using the motives only. Though multiple games and characters are used in various image media, there is no animation to use the game motive and expose Intermedial relations to the users like Wreck-it Ralph. Hence, it is considered that the trials of Wreck-it Ralph deserve to be evaluated significantly[8,10,11].

#### 4. Conclusion

Games have been introduced variously by Intermediality of animations, movies, or advertisements. Wreck-it Ralph can be the representative animation combining animation media only with the motives of the original source. 3D games such as Bio Hazard, Tomb Raider, and Silent Hill were produced to the movies or 2D game such as Steer Fighter 2 to the animation or the movies. However, these works used not only game motives but also the images and narration system of the original courses unlike Wreck-it Ralph. Of course, there was an interesting movie like Pixels (2015) to digest various 8-bit game characters and to express Intermedial relation. Considering the production year, Pixel was produced 3 years later than Wreck-it Ralph. Games have been easily exposed to the users by digital media including computers, televisions, smartphones, and so on. By exposing the games easily, it seems to be the media like animations or movies that are realized somewhat

what the users wish the characters in the games to be alive in reality. Therefore, it is thought that it is critical for Intermedial relation, which consists of major components like game media with image media, to be approached to the users with positive feedback as the high quality media.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper was supported by the Sehan University Research Fund in 2016.

## REFERENCES

[1] Bolter, J. D. "Transference and transparency": Digital technology and the remediation of cinema. *Intermédialités: Histoire et théorie des arts, des lettres et des techniques Intermediality: History and Theory of the Arts. Literature and Technologies*, Vol 6, pp. 13-26, 2005.

[2] Dong-Yeol Jeon, 'Intermediality as semantic category'. *German Lecture*, Vol 51, No. 3, pp. 251-273. 2010,

[3] E-Sac Gwak, 'Analysis of Intertextuality Cases in Games and Animations through "Pixels"', *Journal of Korea Game Society* Apr; Vol 14, No 2, pp. 45-54, 2014.

[4] McLuhan, M. & Lapham, L. H. 'Understanding Media': *The Extensions of Man*. Massachusetts: MIT, 1994.

[5] Rajewsky, I. O. "Intermediality, intertextuality, and remediation: A literary perspective on intermediality", *History and Theory of the Arts Literature and Technologies*, No 6, pp. 43-64, 2005.

[6] Yong-Seob Lim, "Acceptability and Applicability of Cultural Originality in Korean Animation", PhD Thesis in Hong Ik University, 2015.

[7] Bok-Hang Cho, "Intermediality of musical and hybridism aesthetics", *Kyung In Cultural Press*,

August 29, 2014.

[8] Bolter, J. D., Grusin, R., & Grusin, R. A. (2000). 'Remadiation', (Jae Hyeon Lee). Seoul: Communication Book, 2008.

[9] Mersch Dieter, translated by Culturology Study Group, "Media Theory", Yonsei University Press, March 29, 2010.

[10] Chang-Jun Jeong, "A Study on the Advertising Creative Based on the Technology Convergence", *Journal of the Korea Convergence Society*, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 235-241, 2015.

[11] Ho-Jin Song, Eui-Tae Jeong, "A Study on the utilizing parody and pastiche in Contemporary Art Works", *Journal of the Korea Convergence Society*, Vol. 6, No. 6, pp. 201-212, 2015.

[12] [http://disney.wikia.com/wiki/Fix-It\\_Felix,\\_Jr](http://disney.wikia.com/wiki/Fix-It_Felix,_Jr).

[13] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wreck-It\\_Ralph](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wreck-It_Ralph)

[14] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8-bit>

[15] <http://wreckitralph.wikia.com/wiki/TobiKomi>

[16] <http://www.arcade-history.com/?n=fix-it-felix-jr.&page=detail&id=34780>

[17] <http://disney.wikia.com/wiki/TurboTime>

임 용 섭(Yong Seob Lim)



- 2008년 5월 : Ringling College of Art & Design Computer Animation(미술학학사)
- 2015년 8월 : 홍익대학교 일반대학원 영상학과(미술학박사)
- 2016년 3월 ~ 현재 : 세한대학교 만화애니메이션학과 교수
- 관심분야 : 애니메이션, 영화, 게임
- E-Mail : alysart2@sehan.ac.kr