

PYGMALIONIZATION: DO ACTION FIGURES, *NENDOROIDS*, AND PLUSHIES OF FILMS AND GAMES TELL A STORY?

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Abstract

Studies on merchandise or merch as paratexts that serve as nano-narratives in adaptation context are under investigated. We argue that treating merchandise of hyped films and games as in the mentioned fashion might disclose a novel perspective in perceiving them as a narrative text. Employing the theories of paratextuality by Genette, ergodic literature by Aarseth, ludic adaptation by Purnomo et al., franchising storytelling by Parody and nano-narratives by Petten on a corpus of merch from forty animated films and games, we proposed a neologism that we dubbed pygmalionization. This perspective refers to adapting animated films and games into toy-based merch e.g. action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies and treating them as paratexts with the purposes of serving nano narratives and of extending the narrative experiences methectically and metathecically to the general audiences and fans through transtylization. This study is expected to provide insights for adapted merchandise makers and scholars in regard to treating the merchandise as a paratext with nano-narrative functions.

INTRODUCTION

To accompany the launching of anticipated animated films and games with merchandise has been a formula most publishers perform. In the perspectives of economy, this formula is a solid way to exercise revenue milking. In the perspectives of fan services, this formula might strengthen the fan base of the films and games. In the perspectives of narratives, this formula positions the merchandise as a paratext which functions to immerse general audiences and fans alike deeper into the mythopoesis of the films and games. In her study on Disney, Wasko (2020) points out that the diverse category of Disney's merchandise could create what is popularly called as *Disneyana*, enthusiast collecting zeal of anything related to Disney. This *Disneyana* in narrative perspectives is the mythopoesis - the world - of Disney where Disney is guaranteed to generate profits and strong fan base from the fans.

In the perspectives of paratextuality, as implied by Genette (1997), where audiences



imply the content of particular texts through their complementary elements e.g. titles and summaries, the case of *Disneyana* suggests that merchandises, which are paratextual in nature, could establish Disney's mythopoesis. This condition further suggests that narrative building plays a significant role in designing the merchandises. The narratives from which the mythopoesis is built through merchandises are of nano-narratives. In his study on World Wrestling Entertainment, Petten (2010) implies that nano-narratives tend to have three characteristics namely optional, self-immersive, and interconnective. In the context of merchandise, these three characteristics on nano-narratives fit. First, merchandises are optional – general audiences or fans could opt to purchase them or not and even the publishers could opt also to produce merchandises or not. Second, purchasing merchandises implies that the purchasers attempt to self-immense themselves deeper into the mythopoesis of the films or the games. Third, merchandises, due to their companionship nature, are inseparable from their source films and games – implying that they are connected intertextually with the sources.

That merchandises of films and games are intertextually connected to their sources points out that film and game merchandises possess the characteristics of an adaptation. The status of being an adaptation, besides being perceived from intertextual perspectives, is seen also from the transmediality of the merchandises – adapted through what Genette (1997) calls as transtylization from which the merchandises could take a completely different form of media. Ranging from action figures, *nendoroids*, plushies, to stationaires, merchandises produced from films and games have their own distinctive transmediality in the sense that each merchandise type has its own purposes and functions. Gundam plastic model or portmanteaued into Gunpla, for instance, positions the purchasers as a creative individual demanded to construct their Gundam, a famous Japanese animation franchise telling about giant bipedal robot known as mobile suit. Merchandises like Gunpla are different in functions when compared to plushies, for example. Plushies are for the purchasers to 'befriend with' and thus they are designed to be 'huggable'. These different functions, in the perspectives of adaptation, point out that the merchandises also concern on how to adapt the characters from films and games in particular fashions to serve particular narratives the makers want to have.

Studies that address how merchandises are treated as a paratext with nano-narrative functions in adaptation context are under investigated. Previous studies on merchandises which are a part of particular source literary works like films and games revolve around representative values of action figures (Gallagher, 2006), the intertextuality of merchandise with its source texts (Elliot, 2014), fan made merchandise (Affuso, 2018; Santo, 2017), and

merchandise paratextuality (Williams, 2019). What is left from the studies to fill in is perceiving merchandise as a paratext and an adaptation which serve as nano-narrative. We call this phenomenon pygmalionization, where merchandises adapted from films and games function as nano-narrative paratexts that connect themselves with their micro and macro narratives.

Departing from this phenomenon, we attempted to indicate the existence of pygmalionization by explaining the differentiating and defining elements it has. To prove that pygmalionization is existent, we employed the theory of paratextuality by Genette (1997), transtylization by Genette (1997), nano-narratives by Petten (2010), and franchising and adaptation by Parody (2009), and ludic adaptation by Purnomo et al. (2021). Genette's theory of paratextuality was employed to address how film and game's merchandises function as a paratext for their source texts. Genette's transtylization was applied to indicate how merchandises as paratexts were transtylized to fit the target users and target functions. Petten's theory of nano-narratives was implemented to reveal how the transtylized paratexts of merchandises connect themselves with the micro and macro-narratives of the source texts. Micro-narratives refer to the source text which stands individually while macro-narratives to the whole narrative of the source text. An action figure of Naruto who fights against Sasuke in their *gennin*-time outfits, for example, is a nano-narrative. The possible actions by the figure might refer to certain part or scene of the source text. In the case of Naruto and Sasuke in *gennin*-time outfits, the micro-narrative is the fight in the waterfall while the macro-narrative is the arc which leads and culminates into the fight. These nano-narrative, micro-narrative, and macro-narrative elements were further examined by applying the theory of franchising storytelling in adaptation context by Parody (2009). In the end, to indicate how these narratives function as a play by the target users and serve playful purposes, ludic adaptation theory by Purnomo et al. was implemented.

To avoid any deviations, this study limited 'merchandise' into toys encompassing action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies. The first refers to what Keidl (2018) calls as a mediated plaything from which fans could interact with in a doll-customization or doll-playing fashion. The second, produced by Good Smile Company, shares similar functions as action figures with differences on their mini size and cute looking. The third refers to 'huggable' dolls made of soft fabric materials. These three merchandises were selected to refer to the word 'merchandise' due to, as what Gallagher (2006) implies, their nature of mediated performance. The transmediation between the three is intertextually and narratively expressed and thus, it is

assumed that their positions as nano-narratives connected to their micro and macro narratives are vividly indicated.

Film merchandises as stated by Keidl (2018), are a materiality mediated text from which fans could build the story worlds of particular franchise. The same goes for game merchandise with differences, if seen from the perspective of Hutcheon (2006), being the fact that game is an interactive media adapted into merchandises which might fall into showing or interacting media. That film and game merchandises might be an interactive media from which the fans could perform an imaginative or customizable play points out that they have narratives to tell and share. In the perspective of Petten (2010), merchandises like action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies might fall into the category of nano-narratives since they have their micro-narratives – the parts, scenes, or segments of the films or games – and their macro-narratives – the film and the game themselves.

That film and game merchandises are nano-narratives indicate that they are intertextually linked to the other texts – the source texts. That the source texts play a role of being a macro narrative implies the position of the merchandises as a paratext. Texts with ‘para’ attachment signify that they, as implied by Genette (1997), have the attributes of being complementary for the texts where the para texts are embedded. In the context of film and game merchandises, their status as a paratext points out that they tend to extend the narrative experiences of the films and the games to the fans. This narrative experience extension is realized and embodied through what Genette (1997) calls as transtylization. To apply transtylization means to modify the merchandises to fit the target fans and the intended functions. Action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies have different target fans and intended functions. Action figures tend to target male fans, *nendoroids* to unisex, and plushies to female fans. These differences in target fans indicate that gender-based functions might play a significant role in determining and mapping what merchandise should be designed. However, generally the functions of action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies are that of ludic activities.

Ludic activities, as suggested by Ingham and Loy (1974), deal with the transformation driven construct of structural dimensions which include rules, roles, relationships, and technological peripherals for a particular sphere of play. Since ludic activities are transformative and structural in nature, the objects being played might generate different ludic experiences though they might paratextually be derived from the same source texts. As mentioned on the introduction section, Gundam animation franchise might be adapted into action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies. Different transformation or transtylization is required

to signify the rules, the roles, and the relationships each merchandise has with the source text – Gundam. Since ludic activities are the aim of the film and game to merchandise adaptation, the process of adaptation needs to meet distinctive forms of adaptation to preserve the ludicity of the merchandise. A type of adaptation which might address this issue is ludic adaptation.

Ludic adaptation, as stated by Purnomo et al. (2021), circumnavigates on adapting literary texts for younger audiences with playfulness or ludicity as the aim. In the context of film and game merchandises, when a Gundam is adapted, it is expected that the target fans could play the merchandises ludically based on the distinctive demography of the target fans. Problems arise when merchandises are a text – a paratext – and a narrative – a nano-narrative. Due to these attributive statuses, the merchandises are assumed to be story-bound – they have to indicate the presence of a story related to the films and games. To address this issue, Parody (2009) proposes what is called as franchising storytelling. This type of storytelling is defined by two key phrases namely interlinked media products and prolonged, multitextual, and multimedia fictional experiences. The former deals with how the story is interwoven among different texts while the latter with the purpose of the storytelling. Through this storytelling, the narrative intertextuality of the merchandises and their source texts might be revealed to signify the experiences the fans are expected to acquire. These prolonged experiences, though might be varied – depending on the merchandise types, narratively connect what was captured by the fans from the source texts and from the paratexts – the merchandise.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The data of this qualitative study were in the verbal, visual, and operative forms. Verbal data refer to words, phrases, clauses, or sentences uttered by the characters from which the merchandises were adapted and uttered by the narrators or the characters who refer to the adapted characters. Visual data refer to the physical appearances and their related images found from the films and games and their merchandises. Operative data refer to what ludic actions the action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies could do in regard to the source texts. These data were taken from a corpus of film and game franchises along with their merchandises as follows:

Table 1. Films, Games, and Their Merchandises

Animated Films	Live Action Films	Story Focused Games	Video	Gameplay Video Games	Focused
Adit Sopo Jarwo Series	Avengers: Endgame	Assassins' Creed Series		Angry Bird Series	
Doraemon Series	Bima Satria Garuda Series	Dragon Age Series		Blazblue Series	
Digimon Series	Dark Knight Trilogy	Dragon Quest Series		Gran Turismo Series	

Dragon Ball Series	Super	Harry Potter Series	Final Fantasy Series	God Eater Series
Gundam Series		Kamen Rider Series	Kingdom Hearts Series	Guilty Gear Series
Naruto Series		Mulan	Suikoden Series	Monster Hunter Series
One Piece Series		Pirates of the Caribbean Series	Tales of Series	Mortal Kombat Series
Slam Dunk Series		Power Rangers Series	The Witcher Series	Sonic the Hedgehog Series
Pokemon Series		Spiderman: Homecoming	Valkyria Chronicles Series	Soul Calibur Series
Upin & Ipin Series		Star Wars Series	Yakuza Series	Street Fighter Series

Data from film sources were taken from animated and live action films while games from video games that focus on story and on gameplay. These titles were purposively selected due to their high degree of popularity, the defining impacts they brought, and the varieties of merchandise they offered.

Analysis techniques from Spradley (2016) were applied in this study. Four steps were taken to conduct the analysis. They were domain, taxonomy, componential, and finding cultural theme analyses. First analysis step, domain, was implemented to classify the verbal, visual, and operative data from the films, games, and their merchandises. Done, the analysis commenced to taxonomy analysis. Applying the theory of paratextuality by Genette (1997) and transtylization also by Genette (1997) on the data, the findings were expected to indicate the paratextual status of the merchandises and how they were transtylized to fit particular target fans and functions. The third analysis step, componential analysis, was taken by applying the theory of franchising storytelling by Parody (2009), nano-narratives by Petten (2010), and ludic adaptation by Purnomo et al. (2021) to reveal how the paratexts were designed as such to evoke intertextual narratives with the source films and games. The last, finding cultural theme, was exercised by relating all of the findings from the previous steps to prove the existence of pygmalionization and its typology.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section will indicate a necessity that an adaptation from films and games into action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies that are treated as a paratext with nano-narrative functions is better termed pygmalionization. To do so, examples will be given to indicate that pygmalionization deserves its neologism under the umbrella of adaptation studies.

Pygmalionization

The neologism is derived from the myth of Pygmalion, where a carpenter-king falls in love with his statue, Galatea. We deem that this mythological background fits with action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies of films and games since those who purchase those

merchandises are fans who fall in love with the films and games and treat them more than just a merchandise but memorabilia. We define pygmalionization as a film and game to merchandise adaptation that serves as a paratext and nano-narrative of the source films and games to extend the narrative experiences methectically and metathectically through transtylization. Thus, we can say that there are five elements that define pygmalionization namely merchandise adaptation, paratextual function, and nano-narrative function, methectic and metathectic narrative experience extensions, and transtylization.

Table 2. Elements of Pygmalionization

	Action Figures	<i>Nendoroids</i>	Plushies
Merchandise Adaptation	Articulating	Posing	Affecting
Paratext Functions	Decorative	Decorative	Decorative/ Companionship
Nano-Narrative Functions	Character/Scene	Character/Scene	Character
Narrative Experience Extension	Methectic/Metathectic	Methectic/Metathectic	Methectic
Transtylization	Persistive	Alternative	Alternative

As seen from Table 2, each of the five elements of pygmalionization has its own sub classification which defines and determines the characteristics of action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies. First is merchandise adaptation. We classify merchandise adaptation into articulating, posing, and affecting. The first refers to flexibility of movements through the exploits of the joints, the second to the tendency for throwing a pose in decorative fashion, and the third to affective traits like hugging and ‘befriending’. Second is paratext function which we classify into decorative and companionship with the former being the use of merchandise for showing off and the latter for being imaginatively affective as a living being. The third, nano-narrative function, is classified into character and scene-based narratives with the former emphasizing on character and the latter on particular momentous scenes. The fourth, narrative experience extension, is classified into methectic and metathectic with the former indicating an immersion to the source narratives and the latter possibilities for narrative revisiting and renarrating. The last, transtylization, is classified into persistive and alternative with the former striving to mimic the source characters and narratives and the latter to alternate the sources. The details will be explained as follows:

Merchandise Adaptation

Merchandises crafted out of films and games are an adaptation since they transfer the visuals and narratives of particular characters from the source films and games in transtylized forms e.g. action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies. This adaptation is classified into

articulating, posing, and affecting purposes. In *Digivolving Spirits* series, for example, the Digimon action figures in the series are transformable from *rookie* form into *mega* form. Agumon, for instance, could be transformed into its mega evolution form – War Greymon – with the mega form as the first form the fans see after unboxing the package. This transformation ability is in line with what is narrated in the source film. In the Digimon series, each Digimon could evolve from rookie to champion to ultimate and finally to mega form. This synchronization between what the action figures could do with what the characters could do in the film signifies the status of action figures as an adaptation.

What is being adapted is not always a character but more than a character depicting particular scene from the films or the games. In *Slam Dunk's nendoroids*, for example, funny scenes from the films and the comics are crafted similar to what the scenes depict. Fans of *Slam Dunk* series will automatically notice what scenes the *nendoroids* are depicting by looking at them. This cognition indicates that the *nendoroids* meta-narratively transfer the messages of the particular scenes to the fans. This metanarrativity points out that merchandises have the ability to transfer the messages of the source texts to the fans through narrative recalling of what they have seen on the films or games.

Metanarrativity might also be transmitted through the stage sets or the platforms where the action figures stand. Sonic the Hedgehog's Green Hill Zone set, for instance, displays one of the iconic stages in the game world of Sonic. Players of the game are expected to extend their experiences outside of gaming when they have the action figure in their possession. Their extended experiences are connectively bridged by the narrative experiences they had when they played the game and the feeling of nostalgia.

Paratextual Functions

Merchandises of films and games have paratextual functions. The paratextuality is seen from the fact that those merchandises are either officially or fan-based constructed as a companion for the source films and games. Following the success of *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, Mafex published the action figure of Spider-Man with replaceable body parts including the head crafted based on Tom Holland, the actor who plays Spider-Man. That Mafex replicated Tom Holland's head strengthens the status of the action figure as a companion for the film – a paratext. Even they constructed the masks of Spider-Man that the action figure could carry on its hand – signifying the status of Spider-Man being an American superhero formulaically constructed as, Nachbar and Lause (1992) say, *a part of us yet different from us*.

The status of being a paratext is also visible from the verbal and visual information stored on the package to indicate that the merchandise is a companion product of the films or the games. In Square Enix Bring Arts' *Dragon Quest XI's* The Luminary's action figure, for instance, the picture of the action figure shot as if it was on the game world seems to emphasize that the action figure is the extension of the game and to indicate that the action figure visually mirrors the character of the Luminary from the game. The fact that the action figure is produced by the same company that published the game further indicates that the Luminary action figure is the paratext of the game. Having the same company to produce a companionship for the games might strengthen the impression of being original and being canon in the lore extension of the source game.

Nano-Narrative Functions

Action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies have narratives – story – and this is visible from how they could intertextually link themselves narratively with the film and game narratives. The fact that they paratexts also imply that they have their narratives distinctive to themselves. McFarlane's *The Witcher 3 Wild Hunt's* Geralt of Rivia action figure, for instance, comes with a head of a griffin. The presence of griffin head enables the fans to reconstruct one of the most iconic moments where Geralt holds blood dropping griffin's head in the game.

That McFarlane adds the griffin's head points out that they attempt to relive the game's lore for the fans by intertextualizing the narratives of the game through the action figure. This intertextual relation is woven through positioning the action figure as a nano-narrative which means that the narrative of the action figure is in a part-to-whole fashion. In the game, players have to complete a quest called 'The Beast of the White Orchard' to obtain the griffin's head. In relation to the action figure, this quest is the micro narrative of the action figure's narrative since it umbrellas the action figure in a specific narrative. On the other hand, the game quest is the micro narrative of a larger narrative or the macro narrative – the game. Thus, it is expected that the meta cognitive knowledge of the game facilitates the fans in recalling the memory of playing the specific quest where Geralt holds a griffin's head.

In a game which focuses on gameplay like fighting games, the narratives tend to be transferred via what is called as articulation – the degree of movements action figures can do. NECA's *Street Fighter IV's* action figures, for example, have approximately 30s articulations – implying that the fans could flexibly mimic most fighting movements of each character as what is shown from the game. Since movements carry out and define the narrative identity of

the characters, it is assumed that those movements might be categorized as nano-narratives. These nano-narratives emerging from the articulations of the action figures further support the micro-narratives of the characters – the names and the visualization of the movements – and the macro-narratives of the characters – the story backgrounding the characters.

Methectic and Metathetic Narrative Experience Extensions

We propose two types of narrative experience extensions namely methectic and metathetic. The former aims at immersing the fans into the narratives of the source films and games while the latter at disclosing the possibilities for the fans in renarrating and revisiting the sources.

Methectic is derived from Platonic theatrical term *methexis* which means audience involvement. This involvement signifies the roles of audiences in establishing the narrative of a play. We use this term to signify how fans play a significant role in the narratives of the merchandises derived from films and games. The feeling of being immersed into the narrative with the merchandise is what methectic is all about. Plushies, for instance, due to their soft fabrics and cute design, tend to immerse the fans in any form of play from ‘befriending’ them through affective actions like hugging to just showcasing them. In *Pokemon* plushies, for instance, since the source games and films archetypically position the fans as a *Pokemon* Tamer whose job is to catch and nurture their Pocket Monsters, their plushies extend this narrative experience. The extension could take in a ludic activity of collecting ‘real’ *Pokemon* in the form of plushies. With the presence of *Pokemon Go*, which offers a virtual narrative experience extension, the presence of plushies play a more significant role in the extension.

On the other hand, metathetic derived from *metathesis* deals with renarrating or revisiting the source narratives. This term is used to indicate that fans could use their action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies to play the same narratives as the sources or to play an alternate narrative not found from the sources. Dragon Stars’ *Dragon Ball Super*’s action figures, for example, due to the flexible articulations of the figures, fans could revisit the battle between Goku and Vegeta versus Broly through various methods of storytelling and one of them is stop motion. Through this method, fans could recreate the fight, make it like a kind of short animation and upload it to the internet. The fight narrative could be different from that of the source film. Methectic extension could also act self-explanatorily or a self-tellingly through what is called as a diorama. The diorama is established to mimic a momentous scene of films and games from which metacognitively fans revisit the displayed scene.

Transtylization

Transtylization, as implied by Genette (1997), circumnavigates around text modification either through adding up and reducing the text. In the context of action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies, the fact that they have different styles points out that transtylization is on the work when merchandise adaptation is applied. The styles of the three merchandises not only mull over visualization but also operative elements and to some extent audial elements. Though the three might derive from the same films or games, their styles are different with action figures offering highest degree of articulative flexibility, *nendoroids* offering ‘cute’ *chibi* style, and plushies being ‘huggable’ and softest in materials.

The transtylization of action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies also concerns on the adapted source texts. Since films might be categorized into live action and animated films, the problem of being representatively realistic might take place. However, since different merchandises have different styles, being ‘realistic’ is conveyed through a different stylistic approach. In Hasbro’s *Mulan* of the live action adaptation’s fashion doll, due to the status of being ‘fashion doll’, the action figure emphasizes more on dressing play than articulative movements. On the other hands, the concerns, besides mulling over on being 2D or 3D like animated films, are on being a story laden, gameplay laden, or a combination of both genres. In Sega’s *Yakuza* franchise which offers a high-level tension of action in mixture with brutal and dramatic life of Yakuza, challenges evoke when the characters of the game are transtylized to fit to the convention of particular merchandise e.g. *nendoroids*. Since *nendoroids* have to be conventionally *chibi* or small in height with a bit inflated cute head, the gangster looks of Kiryu and Majima, the primary characters in *Yakuza 0*, evoke the feeling of being ‘cute’. This shift on style points out that the *nendoroids* might serve as an alternative narrative – different yet similar to what the metanarrativity of the fans.

The Problems of Pygmalionization in the Perspectives of Ludic Adaptation and Ludic Narratives

Ludic adaptation, as coined by Purnomo et al. (2021), concerns on transtylizing literary works intended for mature and adult audiences into younger audiences. The transtylization applied on websites, comics, animated films, and games covers textual, visual, and operative elements. Applied, the adaptation might be cognitively perceived as being playful in regard to the age of the younger audiences or not. This playfulness, which becomes the axis of concerns on ludic adaptation, is eminent in pygmalionization since the purpose of the adaptation is to play the characters from which the state of being playful is expected to emerge. The problems lie on how ‘ludic’ pygmalionization can be.

The word 'ludic' derives from 'ludus', which means a structured play (Caillois, 2001), and could mean also playfulness (Huizinga, 2014). Being a structured play, it implies that the items produced by pygmalionization could both be played and inciting playfulness. As mentioned on methectic and metathectic narrative experience extension, action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies have a wide variety of what Huizinga (2014) calls as play-functions. These functions are exercised primarily into three primary plays. They are hand-play, mediated play, and showcase. Hand-plays circumnavigate around how the merch is imaginatively played by hands e.g. role-playing, imaginative-friend playing, and situational playing. Mediated-play, as the name implies, deals with employing media in playing the merch e.g. stop motion play and diorama play. The last, showcase, is a play with an intention of exhibiting or display. When these three types of play are seen from the question of how 'ludic' they can be, the answers would be revolving around the fact that each pygmalionization products have their own intended plays and that defines the 'how ludic'. In short, they have their own ludic narratives to build.

The ludic narratives of hand-plays, mediated-play, and showcase are limited to their natures, characteristics, and structures. Hand-plays might be the most flexible of the three when it comes to ludic narratives. From the hand-plays, alternate narratives of the played figures might be constructed e.g. good-and-evil switches or alternate endings. The flexibility arises from the fact that they offer a greater degree of freedom in modification and hand-handling. Mediated-plays are dependent on external supporting media. They might offer alternate narratives in a greater scope and scale than hand-plays when supporting skills like screenplay and storyboarding come to play. Showcase, due to its tendency for being a display, tends to already have a representative scene of the sources. Thus, generating ludic narratives in alternate perspectives might require a certain degree of modification.

That ludic is not always identical to kids, pygmalionization might differ in its possibilities to generate ludic narratives. In adaptation for kids, for instance, proairetic decoding by Nikolajeva (2010), which emphasizes over non-biased message decoding, might be revisited to adjust how proairetic decoding works in merchandise adaptation context. Different approaches are taken when pygmalionization is intended for mature audiences. Since hermeneutic elements tend to be the main concerns of adaptation for mature audiences, the merchandise should address this tendency by, for example, designing a complex set of merchandise construction like Gundam series with their gunpla.

CONCLUSION

Pygmalionization is an adaptation from films and games to merchandise with an emphasis over the transfer of nano-narratives. This adaptation has five defining elements namely merchandise adaptation, paratextual function, and nano-narrative function, methectic and metathectic narrative experience extensions, and transtylization. Through pygmalionization, we can comprehend how action figures, *nendoroids*, and plushies might extend the narratives of the sources and how the extension might ludically serve the players.

The result of this study could be implemented by the scholar of adaptation studies in addressing the phenomenon of merchandise adaptation as a theoretical framework. When applied as a framework, pygmalionization could be applied in tandem with ludic adaptation or cross-generational adaptation to further reveal the roles of ages and age rating in constructing alternate narratives of the merchandise. Further research could address the issues of male and female merchandise adaptation in regard to their reduction or augmentation of the mechanical and narrative elements e.g. body size. In the context of language studies, pygmalionization is also applicable as a basis to indicate whether particular language elements e.g. catchphrases suffer a shift when a character is adapted into a merchandise or not.

Further research could also goggle the issues of unofficial pygmalionization as exercised by fans or merchandise makers. The discussion around these issues might disclose an understanding on how pygmalionization is carried to adjust subjective needs and narratives of the makers. Therefore, making a tandem between pygmalionization and fandom theories as the departing theories is of necessity.

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