

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, there is an elaboration of the theory to analyze the data of this research. Since this study focused on comics translation and onomatopoeia, the following explanations are about those items in a bid to shed a light on the course of this research.

2.1 Comics

This study took comic book as the primary source of data. Therefore, the researcher introduces the history and nature of comics to familiarize the terms. From online encyclopedia, (www.Britannica.com), comic book is defined as a bound of collection of comic strips, usually in chronological sequence, typically telling a single story or a series of different stories. According to Saraceni(2003, pp. 1-3) comics were first created in the last half of the nineteenth century in England; the first regular comic strip appeared in 1884 and featured the first comic's hero, Ally Sloper. A few years later, in 1890, *Comic Cuts* appeared which many consider to be the world's first regularly appearing comic. In the early 1930s some publishers began to collect newspaper comic strips into books, hence the term 'comic book' appeared. At the beginning of the 1980s, the *Manga* (Japanese word for 'comics'), was introduced to the Western world, accompanied by an influx of Japanese animated cartoons to Europe and America.

Nowadays, comic publisher has segmented all rounds of ages, from children to adults. There are some companies that create comic for children such as Walt Disney and Warner Brothers. Those comics usually portray animals as

their characters such as Mickey mouse or Tom & Jerry. In fact, children comic book tends to tell stories with a simple plot, for example, daily activities, fables, fairy tales and heroes. For teenagers, there are Marvels and DC comics that contain heroes as their theme, such as *Iron man*, *the X-Men*, and *Batman*, and the story is carrying a deeper tone than the children comic books. As for adult comics, it has its own category from the content. For an erotic comic it is worldwide known as *Hentai*, according to online oxford dictionary (oxforddictionaries.com), it is defined as a Japanese term to describe any type of sexual desire or sexual act. However, adult comic is not all about erotic materials, some of it contains violent acts and inappropriate for the children to read. For example, *Jojo's bizarre adventure* or *Vagabond* that contains many massacre and mutilation scene uncensored.

On the other hand, this study focused on children comic titled *SmurfsTheAstrosmurf*, a story about the life of the tiny blue creatures. The comic chosen tells about the story of a Smurf who wanted to do a space journey. The Smurfs were first created by Belgian comic artist Peyo (Pierre Culliford) in 1958, the Smurfs is a blue-skinned humanoid creature in white clothing called a "Schtroumpf" meaning sock. In this study, the comic is used to analyze the comic translation and the onomatopoeia in the comic book.

2.2 Onomatopoeia

According to Tsur (2006) onomatopoeia is the imitation of natural noises by speech sounds. Onomatopoeia is often used to imitate sound. Rosalina (2009) on her research stated that sound imitation caused by movement by characters, for

example, walking, kicking, hitting, evading punches, slap, and run. She further noted that “story tellers often to imitate the sound he tells, such as : door knocking *tok, tok, tok*, a *klik* when a key is opening something, *bret* sound when a cloth is ripped”. Mar’at (2005 cited in Rosalina, 2009), stated that the difference of those sounds may happen because of two factors: First, because the thing or the animal emits or produce a sound does not possess physical features similar to human. Second, because the phonological system is different for every language.

According to Yule (2010) “it is difficult to understand the views expressed in the early ninetieth century over the 'tasteless innovation' of a word like *handbook*, or the horror expressed by a London newspaper in 1909 over the use of newly coined word *aviation*”. Yet many terms of recent currency cause similar outcries”. Yule (2010) also suggests using word formation processes of onomatopoeia, for an example, Yule (2010) stated that the formation or use of words such as *buzzes* *murmur* that imitates the sounds associated with the objects or action they refer to”.

In the comic *Smurfs TheAstrosmurf* there are some expressions found which relate to imitating certain sounds or commonly known as onomatopoeia. In linguistics, according to online Merriam-Webster dictionary, onomatopoeia is defined as the naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it, onomatopoeia may also refer to the use of words whose sound suggests the sense.

Various onomatopoeia found in comics, whether inside the bubbles or in the animation, tend to be highly characteristic of the use of country of origin (for

example, they are widely used and, play a key role in U.S. comics). Unfortunately, for the readers from another country, for instance, Indonesia, they may have no meaning. Therefore, it is interesting to observe and analyse the way onomatopoeia translated, in the comic *Smurfs TheAstrosmurf* which is from US, translated into Indonesian which is culturally and linguistically different.

According to Garcés in Mackova (2012, p. 48), onomatopoeic words do not have “a clear and conventional graphic representation” and their expressive effect is traditionally enforced by different typographical and graphical signs. He added that the change of onomatopoeia means additional expenses and work for the publisher.

Furthermore, Mackova(2012, p. 48) stated that in comic book, onomatopoeic words are used very extensively and very specifically, either they are used inside the balloons or outside them. Mackovaadded that even though onomatopoeic words represent sounds, they need to be translated as any other word, because written representations of sounds differ across languages, and the biggest problem with onomatopoeia in comics is that graphically they are usually heavily interconnected with drawings.

On the other hand, Tomášek (2009) in his thesis stated that in the Czech translations of comic books, onomatopoeic words are usually left not translated. There can be several reasons for doing so; some of them are decided by the translator because that would create an unwanted comic effect, which would be in contradiction with the mood of the story. It is interesting to see whether the same situation present in the translation of onomatopoeia from English into Indonesian.

Another study of onomatopoeia by Hayase (1978 cited in Flyxe2002), pointed the possible reasons for several onomatopoeia left not translated due to the sentence of translation is different from the original and therefore faithful translation of the onomatopoeia could disrupt the new structure. Edstrom (1989 cited in Flyxe2002) stated that the reason of omission could be due to style, oversight, or difficulties in findings an English equivalent. Edstrom also discovers two categories in onomatopoeia which are especially problematic to translate, “those carrying more than one meaning simultaneously and those indicating both a description of a situation and a subjective interpretation. Furthermore, Hayase (1978 cited in Flyze 2002) noted that another reason for omitting the mimetic words could be that a translation requires a lengthy, detailed explanation.

Anderson (1998, p. 129) listed four objections of onomatopoeia; onomatopes are conventional signs, not imitative echoes; even if onomatopes are imitative, they are not non-arbitrary; onomatopes exist on the margin of language, not as part of *langue*; and Onomatopes do not accurately imitative natural sounds.

Anderson (1988) pointed out that the capacity of human to mimic sounds is limited by the constraints of phonological systems and the structure of the human vocal tract, so, an exact imitation of natural sounds by human is not possible. Onomatopoeia made by humans does not have to be accurately resembles with the sound imitated because there is a limitation for human’s vocal tract.

One common onomatopoeia categorization applied in research is the categorization by Thomas and Clara (Rahmani, 2013, Seyyedi, 2013, Karina,

2011) According to Thomas and Clara (2004), Onomatopoeia is divided into four groups, namely: calls of animals, sounds of nature, sounds made by human and miscellaneous sounds. Furthermore, they stated “when onomatopoeia are used, there are four main functions, to enrich the contents of texts, and giving more vivid description of the environment, to increase the degree of musicality of the spoken and written texts, and to deepen the impression of readers towards the message.”

Regarding the onomatopoeic word, Marple et al (2013) list English onomatopoeic words and divided them into seven groups. They are; *the sound of elements, food and drink sounds, animals, mystical creature, sounds from people, sounds heard in the city, and sounds of devices, mechanics, and sounds in a building*. Another list of onomatopoeic words can be discovered on online onomatopoeia dictionary, www.writtensound.com. The entries are based on at least two independent sources such as dictionaries, book, comic artists, and popular websites.

In Indonesia, the term onomatopoeia is called *onomatope*. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Online (KBBI Online)* defined onomatopeas a word that imitated the sounds or the voice of something produces, like the sound of a mouse is "cicit" and "kokok" is the sound of a cock. Hanafi (1986) says that onomatope or onomatopoeia is a word that imitates sound to which it refers, such as "gedebuk", "braak", and "kukuruyuk". Bredin (1996) noted that onomatopoeia resembles the sound that it names even though, he also suggest that none of these words is exactly like the sound that it denotes. Furthermore, Bredin (196) stated

there are higher and lower degrees of onomatopoeic resemblance, and the number of words, such as *hiss*, which have quite a high degree of resemblance, are relatively small.

For animal sounds, the following words are typically used in Indonesian. Some of these examples are taken from Moeliono (1988): Bee - "ngung" or "berdengung", Bird - "cicit", or "menicicit", Cat - "ngeong" or "mengeong", Wolf - "auuu" or "melolong", Hen - "kotek" or "berkotek". From the examples above in Bahasa Indonesia, we could see that the verbs play an important role in creating some onomatopoeia.

2.3 Comic Translation

Since comics are distributed world-wide, there is a need to translate them into the languages where the comics are marketed. For example, *Manga* from Japan that use Japanese must be translated into English when it is marketed into English speaking countries, or Walt Disney's comic books must be translated into Indonesian when they are sold in Indonesia bookstores.

In fact, translating comic is quite different from translating other texts. For one, comic contains less word and relies heavily on pictures. According to Mackova(2012, p. 37) comics is unique in its combination of pictorial and verbal content. Text in comics is incorporated in and surrounded by the pictorial content. Comic translation is not specific only because of the pictorial content or because of presence of balloons and captions; comics also contain a high number of special signs. The special signs used in comics are: an asterisk, a breath mark, a foreign languages sign, a music note sign, a lower case and special characters

such as &#@. Then, it is heavily up to the translator to decide whether to retain the original, substitute, and accommodate those signs to target culture and language.

Another thing that makes comic translation significant is space limitation. Therefore, in order to provide a more or less acceptable translation that is as close as possible to the original, the translator may have to remove any merely accessory content. This situation is quite similar with subtitling, for example, which also has strict space limits. Thus, comic translator must decide the way s/he translate verbal content in the comics by weighing on the benefit of the target readers.

In regards to comic translation, there are several theories of converting SL into TL. In this study, the researcher discovers a certain method of comic translation suggested by Zanettin in 2005, namely, intersystemic translation. In his work, he divides intersystemic translation into three types; interlinguistic translation, rewriting, and Intersemiotic translation.

2.3.1 Interlinguistic Translation

In his work, Zanetin stated that Interlinguistic translation is Jakobson's signs by means of some other language. Translation proper studies the various aspects of linguistic communication between people who cannot understand their different languages. Jakobson (1959) stated that "it is concerned with investigating how ethnic and auxiliary languages (lingua franca) work in such situations and with the possibilities of optimizing interlinguistic communication, for instance by the use of international auxiliary languages such as Interlingua.

Usually, with the aim of facilitating interlinguistic communication, interlinguistic translation can be seen as replacing a verbal sign with another sign but belonging to a different language.” Furthermore, Jakobson in Munday (2001) stated that “there is no full equivalence between code-units, while messages may serve as adequate interpretations of alien code-units or messages”. For example, given by Russel (1950 cited in Jakobson, 1959), an English word “cheese” cannot be complete code-units or messages”. For example, given by Russel (1950 cited in Jakobson, 1959), an English word “cheese” cannot be completely identified with its standard Russian heteronym “сыр,” because cottage cheese is a cheese but not a сыр. This shows that no one can understand the word “cheese” unless he has an acquaintance with the meaning assigned to this word in the lexical code of English. According to Rosalina (2009 cited in Setyaningsih, 2012) “there is a fundamental difference in structure between Indonesian and English onomatopoeia so that the translation should be dissimilar”. Furthermore, Flyxe(2002 cited in Setyaningsih, 2012) mentioned that “onomatopoeia is one feature of language that is difficult to translate and there is a tendency to apply omission since it is considered untranslatable”. Omission in translation may occur because of the difficulties in translating.

Zanettin (2005) suggests that comics could be viewed as a semiotic system, comics translation should be seen ultimately as intercultural translation between semiotic environments, which is a multiplicity and heterogeneity of semiotic systems which encompasses texts, media and discourses. From his statement, we

should see comic translation as an intercultural translation between semiotic environments.

2.3.2 Rewriting

According to Lefevere (1992) “rewriting is a way to restore to a certain study of literature as a whole has lost, it might serve as some kind of model that enables sorts of texts in all sorts of media”. Any text developed by rewriting may result of adapting other text to a certain ideology or a certain poetics, and sometimes both. For example, Grimm brother’s *Schneewittchen* widely known as *Snow White*. *Snow White* is a German fairy tale which has many variations of the story and also adaptation, for example, the Disney’s *Snow White* animation changes how the step mother’s dead in the end of story where she fell off a cliff, different from the Grimm Brother’s where she is forced to step into the burning shoes and to dance until she drops dead.

Mackova (2012) on her thesis supports the idea of rewriting because editorial and publisher’s decisions influence the translator and his/her work. Further, Mackova (2012) noted that every publisher has to decide whether to preserve the original format in which the comics was published such as: the type of binding or the size of publication influence the size of panels, the size of balloons, the preference of color and the graphic techniques used. The publisher and the translator policies affect the process of rewriting, for an example, the cost of printing.

An example of rewriting on comic book given by Zanettin (2005) is the different version of *Spiderman* stories. The first story is written by Stan Lee and

Steve Ditko published in 1962, and the 2000 version by Brian Bendis and Mark Bagley. The difference of Stan lee's Spiderman with Brian's can be seen from the skin color of the hero, from Peter Parker, a white American into Miles Morales, a black Puerto Rican (marvel.com). Another example of rewriting on comic book given by Zanettin is the *Flash Gordon* story created by Alex Raymond. The Italian version of *Flash Gordon* (1936) is in black and white, after the reprints, the comic is in color and there are several changes on the dialogue box as shown on figure 1, 2, and 3 below, the figures are taken from Zanettin research.



Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Italian Flash Gordon 1936

Italian Flash Gordon I

Italian Flash Gordon II

On the example, figure 1 is the black and white version of Flash Gordon printed in 1936, figure 2 and figure 3 is the reprinted comic, and the comic is colored, there are changes of dialogue length, and redrawing. A form of rewriting on comic book may include the change of storyline, the length of dialogues, change of color and redrawing.

2.3.3 Intersemiotic Translation

Jakobson (1959) stated “ intersemiotic translation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems”. Thus the translator, instead of paying attention to the verbal signs, they concentrates more on the information that is to be delivered. “It is the actual translation from a semiotic system” (Jakobson, 1959). Zanetin stated that intersemiotic translation is an adaptation, for example, comic to film, novel to comics, and vice versa. Some intersemiotic translations are *Harry potter*, *Narnia*, and *Eragon* which are novels adapted into a film with several changes from the original story.

In this study, the Intersystemic translation theory is used to analyze what are the intersystemic translation methods found on translating onomatopoeia on the comic books from English into Indonesian version, considering that Indonesia does not have any fixed rule of translating onomatopoeia.

2.4 Review of related studies

There are three researches which are closely related to this study. First is Zanettin’s in 2005 with his *Comics in Translation: An Overview*. In his research, Zanettin analyzed the intercultural translation between semiotic environments which are culturally determined. Semiotic environment is a multiplicity and heterogeneity of semiotic systems which encompasses texts, media and discourses.

He also stated that looking at translated comics from the point of view of the target culture may lead to comparisons of features of translated and original comics in the same language, such as onomatopoeic inscriptions or it may lead to contrastive and comparative studies of different translations of the same source

text for different audiences, either in different or in the same target language. Furthermore, he observes comic translation is a process which bears distinctive analogies with that of software localization.

The other study is a thesis by Tomášek in 2009 in *Translating Comics*. In the thesis, Tomášek stated that comics can be subject of translation studies in the same way as literature or film, which is important to understand that comic has their own set of linguistic and pictorial signs, narrative strategies and other features, which combination forms a unique discourse. In his thesis, Tomášek uses comics in the Czech republic, Czech and foreign translated comic book. Tomášek (2009) uses Zanettin's theory that comics are a semiotic system, therefore, translation should be seen as intercultural translation between semiotic environments. He concludes that comics can be subject of translation studies in the same way as literature or film because comic is an independent medium.

The next study is a thesis by Karina in 2011 in *The Study of Onomatopoeia Translation Procedures in Comic Book Case Study: Asterix and The Golden Sickle*. In her research, she mentioned to use procedures of translating onomatopoeia using Vinay and Darbelnet translation method. In her thesis, she used Thomas and Clara's theory to classify the types of onomatopoeia and use it to divide the types of onomatopoeia. In her thesis, she suggested that translation is adopted for culture specific clichés such as idioms, proverbs, fixed expression, and word such as onomatopoeia where the translator tried to emphasis the humor or substitutes the source language with available target language.

In this present study, there is a difference about the subject wherein the source of the data in this study is onomatopoeia from *Smurfs TheAstrosmurfs*, comic book while Karina used *Asterix and the Golden Sickle*. This study is using intersystemic translation suggested by Zanettin which is not suggested by Karina in her thesis; she used Vinay and Darbelnet translation method instead. This study used the combination of Zanettin's Intersystemic translation and Thomas and Clara's Characteristics of Onomatopoeia to analyze the onomatopoeia translation from the perspective of translation studies. The contrast of this present study could be looked in theory, the source of data which is using an online document and well-known comic publisher. This present study is not concerned with the method of onomatopoeia translation.