

## Japanese Translation of Indonesian Comic's Onomatopoeia

**M Ali**

Department of Japanese, Literature Faculty of Letters, Universitas Komputer Indonesia, Indonesia

Email : mo.ali@email.unikom.ac.id

**Abstract.** This study intends to describe translation strategies used for translating onomatopoeia that appear in Indonesian comic books. The data as the source text was taken from one of the indigenous comic written by Indonesian Author. The method used in this study was a qualitative method with content analysis as a technique. All of onomatopoeia that appeared in this comic book will be paired with their Japanese translation before going into analysis. As result, there are 4 translation strategies that used for translating onomatopoeia in Indonesian comic, (1) equivalent, (2) derivative, (3) *katakana-ka*, and (4) coinage. From these results, there is conclusion that translating onomatopoeia are not become easier problem just by considering the number of onomatopoeia in its language itself.

### 1. Introduction

In *manga* and comics, the use of onomatopoeia is carried out in several ways, as (1) used inside speech balloons and (2) used outside speech balloons, which (1) plays a grammatical role as part of the speech line, and (2) is used independently to describe the voice, condition, situation, or behavior represented in the picture [1, 2]. However, there are many onomatopoeia used independently to describe the voice, sound, condition, situation, or behavior inside the speech balloons and also many onomatopoeia used outside the speech balloons as a part of speech line, that is why it is described the use of onomatopoeia in *manga* and comics as (1) used independently, and (2) used as part of speech line [3].

This study only take these independently used onomatopoeia because it's role in *manga* and comics are extremely important. Not only representing sound [4], but also become tools that emphasize the existence of its sound and control readers reading direction [5]. Besides that, onomatopoeia also could bring readers into the comic world that showed by the story of its comics [6]. Besides, in term of translation study, independently used onomatopoeia in *manga* and comics labeled as a big problem due to differences in linguistic features in each language [7], also due to technical and cost because it is necessary to modify the picture to translate the onomatopoeia of *manga* that often appears as part of the picture [2].

The number of Indonesian onomatopoeia that is not as abundant as Japanese onomatopoeia is a main problem in the translation onomatopoeia in Japanese *manga* into Indonesian [8], from this statement it could be hypothetically said that there are not a big problem in the translation of the opposite (onomatopoeia in Indonesian comics into Japanese) regarding an abundant number of onomatopoeia in Japanese which is target text in this study. However, there are many onomatopoeia that appears in Japanese *manga* are not in the dictionary [8] which is classified as nonce onomatopoeia [9] that caused many alphabet version of Japanese onomatopoeia used as translational equivalent in Indonesian translated Japanese *manga* [3]. Considering that there are also many onomatopoeia appear in Indonesian comics are not in the dictionary, this study intends to describe translation strategies used

for translating onomatopoeia that appears in Indonesian comics translated into Japanese, with qualitative method.

## 2. Method

This present study makes use of a qualitative method with content analysis as technique. The data source of this study is from a comic titled “The Grand Legend Ramayana volume 1” written by Is Yuniarto (2015) which published by re:ON comics and Japanese translated version of it, which translated by Comic Catapult with the same title but written in *katakana* as, “カタカナカタカナカタカナ 1” (2016). The main reason for this selection of comic is because teenage boys targeted comics have a bigger number of onomatopoeia than others [10].

The onomatopoeia in this volume of comics analysed according to script in the ST (Source Text) which is Indonesian and the translation used in the TT (Target Text) which is Japanese. In total, there are 278 Indonesian onomatopoeia (registered and nonce) founded in this volume of comics. However, this 278 Indonesian onomatopoeia are only represented by 159 Japanese onomatopoeia in Japanese translated of this volume of comics. Besides that, there are 17 Indonesian onomatopoeia that deleted in Japanese translated of this volume of comics. Therefore from this data, there are 261 pairs of Indonesian onomatopoeia and their Japanese translation collected.

After that, all collected pairs were analysed and also classified by translation strategies that used to translate it, which will be explained in the next section. “*Giongo-Gitaigo 4500 Nihon-go Onomatopoe Jiten*” [11] was dictionary used as referential in this study, because there are no Japanese-Indonesian or Indonesian-Japanese onomatopoeia dictionary yet.

## 3. Results and Discussion

In order to examine how onomatopoeia in Indonesian comics are translated into Japanese, 261 pairs of Indonesian onomatopoeia and their Japanese translation could be translated with “word-for-word translation” methods that been describes by [12], because all of onomatopoeia in this study used independently. And for translation strategy, all of this onomatopoeia could be divided into 4 groups of translational strategies which are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Strategies for translating onomatopoeia in Indonesian comic

	Number of Pairs	Percentage
Equivalent	123	47 %
Derivative	67	26 %
<i>Katakana-ka</i>	56	21 %
Coinage	15	6 %
Total	261	100%

As predicted before, an abundant number of onomatopoeia in Japanese might be the main reason why equivalent strategy become most used strategy with percentage of 47 %, but if we looks over the other strategies, there are more than 50% of onomatopoeia in Indonesian comics that translated without make use that abundant numbers of Japanese onomatopoeia. This result means that an abundant numbers of onomatopoeia in Japanese which are registered in dictionary could only become equivalential translation for Indonesian onomatopoeia which also registered. As evidence, there are derivative strategy with 26 %, katakana strategy with 21 % and coinage strategy with 6% of usage for translating nonce onomatopoeia that appear in Indonesian comics.

### 3.1. Equivalent Strategy

This equivalent strategy means that onomatopoeia that appears in Indonesian comic was translated into Japanese equivalent onomatopoeia, which is in dictionary as shown below for example.

- |             |   |         |
|-------------|---|---------|
| • NYUT NYUT | → | JIN-JIN |
| • SET!      | → | SA`!    |
| • BET!      | → | BA`!    |
| • TEP!      | → | TA`!    |
| • UHUK!     | → | GOHO`!  |

“NYUT NYUT” is Indonesian onomatopoeia that express hurt feeling, this example translated into Japanese by equivalent Japanese onomatopoeia “JIN-JIN” which written as “ジャーン” which also express hurt feeling in Japanese. “SET!” is Indonesian onomatopoeia that express sound when somebody made any small movement, and “BET!” is Indonesian onomatopoeia that express when somebody made any big movement. This example also translated into Japanese by equivalent Japanese onomatopoeia “SA” which written as “サッ!” that also express sound when somebody made any small movement and “BA” which written as “バッ!” that also express sound when somebody made any big movement. Whether pair of “TEP!” and “TA’ (タ)” express sound of footsteps and for the last pair of example, whether “UHUK!” and “GOHO’ (ゴホ)” express sound of cough.

This translational strategies is most rightful and least burden for translator, considering an abundant numbers of onomatopoeia in Japanese, every translator only have to open the dictionary to translate this kind of onomatopoeia.

### 3.2. Derivative Strategy

Derivative strategy means that onomatopoeia that appears in Indonesian comic was translated into Japanese derivational onomatopoeia, as shown below for example.

- |             |   |            |
|-------------|---|------------|
| • HRRRRR    | → | GARURURU   |
| • GYUT GYUT | → | GOJI-GOSHI |
| • DUAR!     | → | DOOOOON    |
| • BUK!      | → | BOKO`!     |
| • BLAM!     | → | BAN`       |

Japanese derivational onomatopoeia means that all of this onomatopoeia are modified version of Japanese onomatopoeia that appears in dictionary. For example, Japanese translation for “HRRRRR”, “GARURURU” which written as “ガッガッ” that shown above is modified version of Japanese onomatopoeia “ガッガッ(garuru)” that appears in dictionary. Its applied with all of Japanese translation pair for “GYUT GYUT”, “DUAR!”, “BUK!”, “BLAM!”. All of it are modified version of Japanese translation that appears in dictionary. “GOJI-GOSHI(ゴジゴシ)” is modified version of “GOSHI-GOSHI(ゴシゴシ)”, “DOOOOON(dooooon)” is modified version of “ドン(don)”, “BOKO`!” is modified version of “ボコ(boko)”, and “BAN`” is modified version of “バン(ban)”.

This kind of translation strategies used when Japanese equivalent onomatopoeia couldn’t express enough the sound or condition that expressed by onomatopoeia in Indonesian comics. And the author of this study thinks that this strategy also used for emphasizing that all of this onomatopoeia are different with normal Japanese onomatopoeia.

### 3.3. Katakana-ka Strategy

Katakana strategy means that onomatopoeia that appears in Indonesian comic was translated into katakana version of Indonesian onomatopoeia, as shown below for example.

- |            |   |           |
|------------|---|-----------|
| • TRANGG!! | → | TOURAAN!! |
| • GRAAAA!! | → | GURAAA!!  |

- SWESH!!                      →        SUESSYU!!
- DREDEDET!!                →        DOREDEDEDDED!!
- BWESH!                      →        BUESSYU!

“TRANGG!!” was translated by “touraan!!”, “GRAAAA!!” was translated by “guraa!!”, “SWESH!!” was translated by “suesshu!!”, and “BWESH!” was translated by “buesshu!”. All of them are not Japanese onomatopoeia at all, and can be classified as *katakana* version of Indonesian onomatopoeia.

This kind of translation strategies used to keep Indonesian onomatopoeia as original as it could be, so could guide the readers, which is Japanese going into the world of The Grand Legend Ramayana, which is not in Japan. This strategies also used to maintain and emphasize Indonesian things although translated into another language.

### 3.4. Coinage Strategy

Coinage strategy means that onomatopoeia that appears in Indonesian comic was translated into not into Japanese onomatopoeia nor *katakana* version of Indonesian onomatopoeia, in other words coinage words as shown below for example.

- ZGLARR!                      →        GUOBAAN!!
- BRUGH!                      →        DOUBO`!!
- CRAT!!                      →        PACYA!
- DHES!                      →        BASSU!
- WHES!                      →        SYE`!

The different between this strategy and *katakana* strategy in 3.3 is that all this translational equivalence were made by translator and do not have any rule to make it. For example, “ZGLARR!” that translated into “GUOBAAN(guraan)!!” as translator feel the sound made by “ZGLARR!” is could be expressed by “GUOBAAN(guraan)!!” in Japanese, and so on for the other pairs of example.

## 4. Conclusion

The result of this study shown that translation strategies for onomatopoeia that appear in Indonesian comics classified as 4 group of strategies, with 1. Equivalent strategy; 2. Derivative strategy; 3. *Katakana-ka* strategy; 4. Coinage strategy. It seems that to translate onomatopoeia in Indonesian comics, equivalent strategy become most used strategy, but other strategies combined have bigger percentage than it. Which is mean, that an abundant numbers of onomatopoeia in Japanese did not make problem in translating onomatopoeia into Japanese become easier than opposites. However, because this study only make use one Indonesian comic, deeper study is required to get more reasonable results and conclusion.

## References

- [1] Schourup, L. (1993). Nihongo no kakikotoba-hanashikotoba ni okeru onomatope no bunpu nitsuite [on distribution of onomatopoeias in spoken and written Japanese]. *Onomatopia: Giongo-gitaigo no rakuen [Onomatopoeia: Paradise of mimetics]*, 48-55.
- [2] Inose, H. (2010). Manga ni miru giongo/gitaigo no hon'yaku-shuhō. *Hon'yaku Tsūyaku Kenkyū*, 10, 161-76.
- [3] Ali, M. 2020. Nihon to indonesia no manga ni okeru onomatope no taisho kenkyuu, Kanazawa University.
- [4] Nishimi, M. 2015. Onomatope no hatasu yakuwari to kouka ni tsuite, *Komyunikeeshon bunka*, 10, pp. 223-240
- [5] Natsume, F. (2013). Manga ni okeru onomatope [Onomatopoeia in Manga]. *Onomatope kenkyū no syatei*, 217-41.

- [6] Chen, 2013. Chuugokujin wo taisho toshita nihon-go komikku ni okeru onomatope no rikai ni kan suru chousa. *Jinkou chinou gakkai zenkoku taikai ronbun-shu*, 27, pp. 1-4
- [7] Mizuno, A. (2003). Nihongo to chūgokugo ni okeru onomatope ni tsuite: Honyaku manga no hikaku kara. *Gengo to Kōryū*, 6, 129-47.
- [8] Handayani, D. 2003. Nihongo no manga to bungaku sakuhin no onomatope no indonesia-go yaku Jittai. *Nihongo ronken 7 Goi to Bunpo to Kenkyuu Gyosho*, 297, pp.155-277
- [9] Tamori, I. (2002). Onomatope: Giongo/Gitaigo wo tanoshimu [Onomatopoeia: enjoy giongo/gitaigo].
- [10] Chiba, N. 2010. Gendai manga no onomatope kisaishi no taishosei nenrei ni yoru sa kara mita hyougen gihou. *Gobun*, (137), pp. 117-112.
- [11] Ono, M. (2007). Giongo/Gitaigo 4500 nihongo onomatope jiten [Japanese onomatopoeia dictionary 4500 mimetics]. *Tokyo: Shogakukan*.
- [12] Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*, 66. New York: Prentice hall.