ONOMATOPOEIA IN AVATAR “THE LAST AIR BENDER NORTH AND SOUTH”

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Abstract

Comic is an image juxtaposed with other images in a sequence and make a story. The onomatopoeia word is used to build a story as well as for visual effects in comic stories. This study investigated onomatopoeia emerged in Avatar “The Last Air Bender-North and South” Comic Chapter 1. This study applied descriptive qualitative method. The data collection was carried out by using the observation through several stages, such as reading comics, highlighting the onomatopoeia found in comic, classifying onomatopoeia according to its type, and analyzing the meaning of onomatopoeia. This study used the theory from Bredin (1996) to determine the type of onomatopoeic word. On the other hand, the meaning of onomatopoeic words was analyzed using the theory from Thomas (1995). The results of this study indicated that three types of onomatopoeia found in comics, they were 32 (76%) direct onomatopoeia, 2 (5%) associative onomatopoeia, and 8 (19%) exemplary onomatopoeia. The meaning of onomatopoeic words contained in comics was included in abstract and contextual meaning.

Keywords: Avatar, comic, meaning, onomatopoeia

INTRODUCTION

Linguistics is the study of language including in the analysis of various linguistic elements such as form, meaning, and context. According to the type of branch itself, linguistics
is classified into two, namely microlinguistics and macrolinguistics. Microlinguistics examines the nature of language naturally as a cultural product that includes various elements in language. Macrolinguistics studies linguistics in general where its study includes the influence of language on the scientific field, while Microlinguistics examines the internal structure of certain languages that are seen in the universal scope of language such as phonology and phonetics, morphology, semantics, pragmatics, syntax, and lexicology.

According to Nordquist (2019), phonology is a branch of linguistics that studies speech sounds with reference to their distribution and patterns. Sounds and sounds are not only found in real life but also in writing as well as in comics which are often called onomatopoeia. Sugahara (2010) explained that onomatopoeia is special language expression because it is phonological forms appear to be more directly associated with is meaning. Bredin (1996) argued that in the standard use of the word onomatopoeia it refers to the relationship between sound and something else. In other words, onomatopoeia is a rhetorical device: a language technique or device used to create an effect in or for the reader. Onomatopoeia is placed outside the sentence bubbles in comics. There are many examples of onomatopoeia itself and some of them can be interpreted with a dictionary such as crack, kick, glare, chirping, punch, and other words that can be found in the dictionary while those that cannot be found in the dictionary are like “shraaa”, “smooof”, “raaaa”, and so on all these words imitate the sound of objects, animals and so on. These words can be found in literary works.

One of the literary works that can be enjoyed by all circles is comics. Comic is a literary work in which there are pictures and writings that tell about something. According to McCloud (1993:9), comic is a juxtaposed pictorial and other image in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer. One example of a comic is Avatar “The Last Air Bender - North and South” comic. It tells the story of the world of martial arts and magic with Asian influences. The series is written in the form of a book series, with each episode considered a "chapter" and each season referred to as a "book". This comic has many seasons and episodes. One of them is a comic that connects Avatar The Legend of Ang and Avatar Kora is the North and South Arc. The problems raised in this comic are first, what types of onomatopoeic words found in Avatar: the Last Air Bander – North and South comic and the meanings of onomatopoeic words.

The previous studies relevant to this research were written by Wijaya (2021) in his thesis entitled Onomatopoeia Found in Webtoon Comic entitled “The God of High School”. This study collected the data from an online comic platform called Webtoon. This study examined two problems, what the types of onomatopoeic words found in the Webtoon comic “The God of High School” and the meanings of onomatopoeic words found in the comic. This study collected data from an online comic platform called Webtoon and obtained a total of 125 data divided into 40 Direct Onomatopoeia, 8 Associative Onomatopoeia, and 77 Exemplary Onomatopoeia. Next, the thesis of Aditya (2019) entitled "Onomatopoeia Found in Black Panther vs Deadpool Comic Written by Daniel Kibblesmith". In his research, the problems taken were the types of onomatopoeic words found in Black Panther vs Deadpool comic and the context of the situation found in the comic. Hee used the theory from Elizabeth (2013) to identify the types of onomatopoeia words and to find out the context of the situation he used the theory from Halliday (1989). The study found 66 data including 8 types of mechanical, 12 fast motion, 21 musical, 0 data of food preparation and earring, 23 fighting, and 2 animals.
Finally, an article entitled "An Analysis of Onomatopoeias in Garfield Comic" by Eliza (2013), from the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Andalas University. The problems investigated in the study were the kinds of onomatopoeic words featured in Garfield comic and the meanings of the onomatopoeic words. She divided the types of onomatopoeia into two, primary onomatopoeia (PR) and secondary onomatopoeia (SC) based on the theory of Alexander (1963). To find out the meaning of onomatopoeia, the writer used the theory of Ullman (1964) in which the meaning is divided into two, namely lexical meaning and contextual meaning. The study found 33 onomatopoeic words.

In this research, the researchers would like to discuss the types of onomatopoeic words found in Avatar “The Last Air Bender North and South comic and the meanings of onomatopoeic words found in the comic. This study focused on finding the types of onomatopoeia words and their meanings in the comic entitled. The theory used in this study was the theory of Bredin (1996) which divided onomatopoeia into 3, Direct Onomatopoeia; it is a word that is similar to the sound of an object. Bredin stated that the criteria required for this type are: 1) the denotation of a word is a class of sound, and 2) the sound of the word resembles a member of the class. Second, Associative Onomatopoeia occurs whenever the sound of a word resembles a sound associated with whatever it is that the word denotes. Next is Exemplary Onomatopoeia is foundation upon the amount and character of the physical work used by a speaker in uttering a word. In other word, Exemplary Onomatopoeia is form of word that imitates a real sound based on the physical work or the quantity of the sound it represents. This theory is used to analyze the types of onomatopoeia in comics, while to analyze the meaning of onomatopoeia words this study uses the theory of Thomas (1995) which explains the meaning that can be divided into 2, namely Abstract Meaning and Contextual Meaning.

METHOD

In this study, the method used to collect onomatopoeia word data was the observation method. There were four steps in data collection; data collection was done by reading Avatar: The Last Air Bender - North and South comic Chapter 1, after that finding and classifying the onomatopoeia word based on Bredin’s (1996) theory, then for the identification of the meaning of the word onomatopoeia used the theory of Thomas (1995). The reason for choosing comics as a data source is because in the comics there are many elements of onomatopoeic words that can build the story and the reason for choosing Avatar: The Last Air Bender - North and South comics as a data source is because the onomatopoeia word in this comic is sufficient to be used as data in this study. This comic is also an old comic that is well-known among comic lovers. This comic is one of the comics that was adapted into an animated film produced by Nickelodeon which ran for 20 episodes from February 21th, 2005, to December 2nd, 2005. Apart from being adapted into a film, this comic was also adapted into games including Avatar: The Last Airbender - THQ (2006), Avatar: Last Airbender – Burning Earth - THQ (2007), and Avatar: Last Airbender - Into The Inferno - THQ (2008) and most importantly there is no research examining onomatopoeia elements in this comic. The data analysis was conducted by describing the types and meaning as the theory applied to obtain the specific result of solving the research problems.
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study can be found in 42 data with 3 types of onomatopoeia words in the comic of Avatar “The Last Air Bender North and South” Chapter 1 including 32 Direct Onomatopoeia, 2 Associative Onomatopoeia, and 8 Exemplary Onomatopoeia as shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Onomatopoeia</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associative Onomatopoeia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary Onomatopoeia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Direct Onomatopoeia

1. *Smoooff!*
   Katara: Ha haha!
   Sokka: Just so you know, I have never been a fun of this. (*Smoooff!*)
   Katara: Sokka .. ?!
   Sokka: I’m fine, I’m fine. But who would put a giant beam in the middle of the.
   Sokka: WHOA

In this scene, Katara and Sokka are snowboarding by riding seals, because it's too fast, Sokka can't even cool down and crashes into a construction made of wood, and at the time of crashing an onomatopoeia word *Smoooff!* appears. Based on the theory proposed by Bredin (1996) direct onomatopoeia can be defined as an imitation of real sound of thing. *Smoooff!* can be categorized as direct onomatopoeia because it is an imitation of the sound of wood hitting Sokka. The onomatopoeia word *Smoooff!* has a contextual meaning. According to Thomas (1995), the words actually meant on the occasion in question could only be determined in context. This can be categorized as contextual meaning because in the comic panel the word
**Smoooff!** means the sound of the collision occurring between Soka and the wood that occurs on the snow that makes the snow fly. Abstractly onomatopoeia word *Smoooff!* cannot be interpreted because according to Thomas (1995), abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. Onomatopoeia word *Smoooff!* do not have in common the words, phrases, or sentences used in the dictionary.

2. **Splat!**

Katara : Looks like they’re building,,., a housing complex, maybe? or a factory?
Sokka : Whatever it is, it’ll be the biggest structure in the entire South Pole, for sure!
Sokka : Hey, kid! What are they building here?
Boy : My mama told me not to talk to strangers!
Sokka : What?!! I’m not a stranger! I’m from around here! I’m Sokka of the Southernwater tribe!
Boy : So… you’re a friend?
Sokka : Yeah! I’m a friend! *(splat!)*
Sokka : Why, you little…!
Boy : Ha ha!
Builder: Hey! What do you brats think you’re doing?

Figure 2. *Avatar: “The Last Air Bender North and South”* page 13.

In this scene, it can be seen from the expressions on the faces of Katara and Sokka who are surprised to see the very large structure of the building. Katara thought that the structure of the building would be turned into a housing complex or factory in the middle of the scene. Sokka asked a boy about what buildings were built there. He also said that he was from the Southern Water Tribe. Suddenly, the boy threw a snowball in Sokka’s face then onomatopoeia word *Splat!* appear. Onomatopoeia word *Splat!* can be categorized as direct onomatopoeia because the word onomatopoeia is an imitation of the sound of an object hitting Sokka’s face and the object is a snowball. This is also supported by the statement from Bredin (1996) that
direct onomatopoeia can be defined as an imitation of real sound of thing. The meaning of the onomatopoeia word Splat! can be interpreted abstractly and contextually. According to Thomas (1995) abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. Abstractly onomatopoeia word Splat! has the meaning a sound of something soft and wet or heavy striking a surface and a similar meaning to splash which means splashing water. Contextual meaning, according to Thomas (1995), it is the meaning of word in particular situations and certainly in several kind of context. Contextually onomatopoeia word Splat! means the sound of a snowball hitting Sokka then sticks to Sokka's face because the situation that occurs in this scene is informal where the boy whom Soka meets considers the action taken as a game as seen from the scene where he laughs after throwing a snowball at Sokka's face.

3. **Knock Knock**

   Hakoda: One second, we’re almost done.
   Katara : **(Knock Knock)** Dad?
   Hakoda: Katara? Sokka?
   Hakoda: You’re here!, you’re really, really here!

   ![Figure 3. Avatar: “The Last Air Bender North and South” page 27.](image)

   In this panel, Sokka’s father named Hakoda is discussing something with two people named Maliq and Malina. Then, Katara and Sokka enter while knocking on the door and the words Onomatopoeia knock knock appear. The word *knock knock* is an imitation of the sound between the impact of Katara’s hand and the door and this can be categorized as direct onomatopoeia because according to Bredin (1996) direct onomatopoeia can be defined as an imitation of real sound of thing. The word *knock knock* has abstract and contextual meanings because according to Thomas (1995) abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary, and contextual meaning is the meaning of word in particular situations and certainly in several kind of context. Abstractly the word knock is strike a surface noisily to attract attention, especially when waiting to be let in through a door and can be classified as: 1. a noun which means the sound of a knock. 2. a verb that is something that is
Onomatopoeia in Avatar “The Last Air Bender North and South” (Kadek Bara Dwipayana, Putu Desi Anggerina Hikmaharyanti)

done before entering the room or the same as saying excuse me. Contextually it can be based on the situation that occurs in the scene. The situation is formal because there is a meeting between Hakoda who is the leader of the southern water tribe and two people from the northern water tribe. The word *knock knock* meant saying excuse me from Katara and Sokka before entering the room.

4. *Rrrr!*

Katara : Dad, you make sure Malina’s okay!
Spkka and I will get that briefcase!
Sokka : And those kids!
Sokka : Over there!
Waiter : Go gogo! (*Rrrr!*)

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4. Avatar: “The Last Air Bender North and South”** page 40.

In this comic panel, it has seen that Katara and Sokka are trying to seduce two waiters who are carrying away Maliq’s suitcase. When at the front door of the restaurant Soka saw they were on a snow motorbike and said “over there!”, then the two waiters panicked and one of them said to hurry up and at the end of the panel the words *Rrrr!* based on the theory of Bredin (1996) which states that direct onomatopoeia can be defined as an imitation of real sound of thing. Then the onomatopoeia said *Rrrr!* itself can be categorized as direct onomatopoeia because the word indicates or can be said to be an imitation of the sound of a snow motorbike driven by the two restaurant waiters. If the meaning of the onomatopoeia word 'Rrrr!' itself cannot be interpreted abstractly because there are no words related to this word in phrases or dictionaries as well as the theory from Thomas (1995) which states abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. It is different when interpreting contextually because according to Thomas (1995), contextual meaning is the meaning of word in particular situations and certainly in several kind of context. Thus, the onomatopoeia word *Rrrr!* can be interpreted as the sound of a snow motorbike being ridden by two restaurant
waiters who ran away from Sokka and Katara's pursuit because the word appeared after one of the restaurant waiters told his colleague to go quickly, then the onomatopoeia word *Rrrr!* appeared on the screen.

**Associative Onomatopoeia**

5. *Growl!*
   
   Sokka: “Huff huff” are we clear?  
   Katara: I think so  
   Troops: Eesh, spoke too soon  
   Troops: Snow leopard-caribou! *(Growl!)*

![Figure 5. Avatar: “The Last Air Bender North and South” page 68.](image)

In this scene, Sokka and Katara managed to get out of Gilak's hideout under the fire nation's warship. When they thought that they were safe, in fact, they were still being followed by Gilak troops riding Snow leopard-caribou and at the end of the scene the onomatopoeia word *Growl!* appeared. According to Bredin (1996), Associative Onomatopoeia occurs whenever the sound of a word resembles a sound associated with whatever it is that the word denotes. The word *Growl!* can be said as Associative onomatopoeia because it resembles the sound of a growling Snow leopard-caribou. Thomas (1995) states abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. Abstract meaning of the word *Growl!* is a low guttural sound made in the throat by a hostile dog or other animal and this word can be classified as a verb that means very angry, besides that, this word can also be classified as a noun such as the sound produced by animals when they feel threatened or threaten their prey. Contextually the words actually meant on the occasion in question could only be determined in context. This means that contextual meaning is meaning that appears in certain situations to support certain contexts. In this situation, the Snow leopard-caribou is chasing Sokka and Katara who are considered as prey. The word *Growl!* indicates that the animal is aggressive or alert when pursuing its prey.
6. *Graaa!*
Katara : Get on! Kkksshhkktt!
Sokka : Faster, faster!
Katara : I’m trying, I’m trying! (*Graaa!*)
Sokka : Hold on, I got an idea!
Sokka : Auntie Ashuna’sleal jerky!

After realizing that they were still being chased by Gilak's troops, Katara and Sokka rushed back to escape by making a sled, using Katara's water bending, but Snow leopard-caribou caught up with them and in the middle of the scene the onomatopoeia word *Graaa!* Bredin (1996) states that Associative Onomatopoeia occurs whenever the sound of a word resembles a sound associated with whatever it is that the word denotes. Onomatopoeia word *Graaa!* can be identified as Associative Onomatopoeia because it resembles the roar of a snow leopard. The meaning of the word *Graaa!* can only be determined from contextual meaning only because Thomas (1995) states abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. The word *Graaa!* cannot be found in the word class verb, noun, adjective, etc. This word can only be interpreted contextually according to the opinion of Thomas (1995) which states contextual meaning is the meaning of the word in particular situations and certainly in several kinds of context. The situation that occurs in this scene is informal because this situation occurs in the open in the procession of chasing Sokka and Katara. The onomatopoeia word *Graaaaa!* produced by the Snow leopard-caribou can be interpreted as the roar of the animal.

**Exemplary Onomatopoeia**

7. *Slip!*
   Maliq : Come back, you thief!
   Malina : I gote her, Maliq! (sploosh!)
   Waitress: Yikes! (*slip!*)
In this scene, Maliq can be seen calling a female servant carrying a bag to run away, but she doesn't want to come back. Seeing what was happening, Malina immediately used her water control to stop the maid and made the floor slippery. Suddenly the waitress who was running carrying the bag fell and the onomatopoeia word *slip!* appeared. Onomatopoeia word *slip!* included in the type of Exemplary Onomatopoeia, because *Slip!* shows the physical work experienced by the waitress when she fell on a slippery floor. Bredin (1996) also stated that Exemplary Onomatopoeia is foundation rests upon the amount and character of the physical work used to be a speaker in uttering a word. According to Thomas (1995), abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. The word onomatopoeia *slip!* means sliding unintentionally for a short distance, typically losing one's balance or footing. This word also has the same meaning as slipping, or sliding over a slippery surface. In contextual meaning, it is based on the situation in the scene of the comic, which takes place in a restaurant in an informal situation. The word *Slip!* represents the sound of an incident experienced by a woman who looks like a Waitress who fell on the floor.

8. *Krash!*

Sokka : Ow.
Sokka : As I was saying, sled made of ice can withstand the impact of the landing
Katara : and as I was saying …
In this panel, there is a scene where Sokka fell from the top of a cliff while chasing the two restaurant waiters who stole Maliq's briefcase. When it landed and hit the snow, the onomatopoeia word *Krash!* suddenly appeared. Based on theory proposed by Bredin (1996) exemplary onomatopoeia is form of word that imitates a real sound based on the physical work or the quantity of the sound it represents. Because of that onomatopoeia word *krash!* type can be categorized as exemplary onomatopoeia. In accordance with Bredin's theory which states that exemplary onomatopoeia is an imitation of physical work, said *krash!* in this comic is also an imitation of the physical work of Sokka who fell from a cliff. Onomatopoeia word *krash!* has the same pronunciation with the word *crash* and in the scene also shows the occurrence of accidents experienced by Sokka and Katara. The abstract meaning of the word *krash!* or *crash* means a violent collision, typically of one vehicle with another or with an obstacle. Meanwhile, the contextual meaning of the onomatopoeia word *krash!* based on the context of the situation that occurs in the comic scene, which takes place in an open nature surrounded by snow in an informal situation. The word *krash!* represents what happened to Sokka and Katara, that is they fell and hit the snow.

9. *Bump!*
   - Katara : Whoa whoawhoa
   - Katara : oof! *(Bump!)*
   - Katara : I told you to.
   - Sokka : Shhh, I think the big guy’s got something to say
   - Gilak : Greetings, I am Gilak of the southern water tribe, and you are Sokka and Katara, children of Hakoda.
In this scene, Katara can be seen sliding and falling on Sokka, so the onomatopoeia word *Bump!* appears. According to Bredin (1996), exemplary onomatopoeia is form of word that imitates a real sound based on the physical work or the quantity of the sound it represents. Therefore, *Bump!* can be categorized as exemplary onomatopoeia because it is the sound that occurs due to Katara falling on Sokka. Thomas (1995) states abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. Abstractly *Bump!* can mean a light blow or a jolting collision or it has the same meaning as hit, crash, or smash is usually used to indicate a collision. Contextually, Thomas (1995) states that the words actually meant on the occasion in question could only be determined in context. The contextual meaning is based on the situation in the comic scene taking place in a cave or Gilak's hideout in an informal situation. The word *Bump* represents the action that Katara takes when landing which looks like she is pressing down on Sokka.

10. *Kick!*
   Maliq: Sokka! Katara!
   Katara: Is Malina okay?
   Maliq: She’s awake, thank havens!
   Maliq: Were you able to...
   Katara: I’m sorry Maliq
   Maliq: Bah! *(Kick!)*
   Sokka: Listen, Maliq, we’ll figure out a way to get your briefcase back!
   Maliq: It isn’t just about the briefcase! It’s about justice!
   Maliq: Malina is the single most important person in the world to me, and those… those ruffians hurt her! If this were the North Pole, they wouldn’t have been able to leave the restaurant, let alone city!
In this panel, we can see a scene where Maliq runs up to Katara and Sokka and then informs them that Malina has woken up from fainting. In the middle of the scene appears the onomatopoeia word *kick!* when Malih kicked the snow because he was disappointed his briefcase couldn't be brought back by Katara and Sokka, he was also annoyed with the person who had hurt Malina. According to Bredin (1996), the form of a word that imitates a real sound based on the physical work or the quantity of the sound it represents and so called exemplary onomatopoeia. Because of that, the onomatopoeia word *kick!* can be categorized as exemplary onomatopoeia, because the word *kick!* in the middle of the scene imitates the sound or represents the movement made by Maliq when kicking snow. According to Thomas (1995), abstract meaning is related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary. The onomatopoeia word *kick* has two abstract meaning: 1. Noun: a blow or forceful thrust with the foot, 2. Verb: strike or propel forcibly with the foot. In a contextual sense based on the situation that shows the conversation between Sokka, Katara, and Maliq. The situation that occurs in this scene is informal, it can be seen from where they are talking outside the room, and also at that time Maliq is in a state of anger over what happened to Malina and his briefcase being stolen. In contextual meaning, the word kick represents the action of Maliq who is angry and then blows or pushes the snow with his feet.

**CONCLUSION**

There were 42 data of onomatopoeia found in Avatar comic “The Last Air Bender North and South” Chapter 1. The analysis regarding onomatopoeia was conducted by applying Bredin’s (1996) theory as the main theory which divided onomatopoeia into three types; Direct Onomatopoeia, Associative Onomatopoeia, and Exemplary Onomatopoeia. There were three types of onomatopoeia investigated in the comic, they were constituted 32 Direct Onomatopoeias, 2 Associative Onomatopoeias, and 8 Exemplary Onomatopoeias. Based on the findings above, the majority of onomatopoeia words found in the Avatar comic “The Last Air Bender North and South” (Kadek Bara Dwipayana, Putu Desi Anggerina Hikmaharyanti)
Bender North and South” Chapter 1 were direct onomatopoeia. In the finding and discussion section of this research, there were only some data included as sampling, they were 4 Direct Onomatopoeias (Smoooff!, Splat!, Knock Knock, and Rrrr!), 2 Associative Onomatopoeias (Growl! and Graa!), and 4 Exemplary Onomatopoeia (Slip!, Krash!, Bump!, and Kick!). With the discovery of many onomatopoeia words in the comic, it can be concluded that onomatopoeia plays a very important role in building a story of the comic and adds visual images which makes the comic more interesting to read. The meanings contained in onomatopoeia are also sometimes similar to the meanings of words found in dictionaries, but sometimes the meaning of onomatopoeia can only be interpreted contextually because not all words are related to the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence in the dictionary.

REFERENCES


