

# AN ANALYSIS OF ONOMATOPOEIAS IN DONALD DUCK COMIC

Tiara Eliza

English Education Study Program, Palembang University

Fahmi

English Education Study Program, Palembang University

## Abstract

*This study discusses the types and meaning of onomatopoeias found in Donald Duck (2005) comic. In collecting the data, the writer used observational method and note taking technique (Sudaryanto, 1993). In analyzing the data, referential identity method (Sudaryanto, 1993) is applied. The types are analyzed by referring to Ullman's (1962). The meanings are analyzed and strengthened by using the lexical meaning (Lyon, 1995) and contextual meaning (Ullmann, 1962) theories. The results show that there are two types of onomatopoeias found in the comic, the primary and secondary onomatopoeias. The primary onomatopoeia is the direct imitation of a sound produced by an object while secondary onomatopoeia comes from the sound combination produced by the specific characteristic of an object and its movement. In addition, the meanings of onomatopoeias derive from the lexical and contextual meanings. The lexical meaning refers to the dictionary meaning and the contextual refers to the context of an onomatopoeia in the comic line. From 15 data, the dominant type found is the secondary onomatopoeia.*

**Keywords:** Onomatopoeia, Primary Onomatopoeia, Secondary Onomatopoeia, Lexical Meaning, Contextual Meaning

## Introduction

Onomatopoeia is naming of an object which imitates the sound produced by the object (Gasser, 2006: 4). The form of an onomatopoeia can be found in our daily life. It may derive from the sound of an object, an animal and an action. For examples, the onomatopoeias which derives from the sound of an object are the sounds of a bell, a horn or a telephone; from the animal's sounds are the sounds of cats, cows and from the action's sounds are the imitated sounds of falling, gun shooting or cough. Such sounds can arbitrarily represent certain objects or actions. Among various media, onomatopoeic words are featured heavily in comic.

Basically, comics are created to entertain, since comic itself literally means funny. As in Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary (2003: 262), comics means "to provoke mirth, funny and ludicrous". A comic consists of picture and language expressions. Actually, when people reads a comic, he or she does not only enjoy the images but also deals with the linguistic expressions. One of them onomatopoeia, makes comic dialogues become more attractive. At present, there are many "onomatopoeic words created productively in line with this, Hock (1986: 50) states that "since the imitation of sound can proceed in more than one way and time, consequently onomatopoeic forms can be created at any time." Onomatopoeias have been increasingly produced, as can be found in Donald Duck comic strips. Onomatopoeic words found in Donald Duck comic strip can be analyzed from many aspects. In this case, I focus on two aspects: the kinds and the meanings of the onomatopoeic words. They are formulated in the following research questions:

## Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia, or also known as onomatopoeic word, derives from Greek that means "name making". It also means "make their own names" (Robertson, 1954: 186). "Onomatopoeia is a word that imitates nature sounds that are often natively thought to be completely iconic since it is perfect replicas of the actual sounds they refer to" (Pierce in Antilla, 1972: 14). Thus, onomatopoeia is the naming of an object which derives from the imitation of the sound produced by the object itself. For example, the word 'quack' is an imitated word that represents the sound of a duck. Furthermore in relation to the concept of 'symbol', onomatopoeia can also be symbolic since it is immediately evident in a comparison among different languages.

Languages of the world have different onomatopoeia. For example, an English pig will produce the sound oink while France's is groin-groin, and Chinese's is hulu-hulu. A dog's sounds are kukure in Nepali and kutta in Hindi. These variations occur because each language user interprets onomatopoeic words in accordance with their phonological system and culture (Thomas, 2004:15). However, semantically, the of onomatopoeias are (Ullman 1962:84):

### 1. Primary onomatopoeia (PR)

The primary onomatopoeia is the imitation of sound by sound. The sound is produced by the object itself. Onomatopoeia occurs in words, which imitate sound, and this suggests the object described (Alexander, 1963:20). In this case, naming of an object by imitating the sound produced by the object itself, like buzz, crack, growl, hum, plop, roar, squeak, whizz. Thus, primary onomatopoeia can be called as the onomatopoeic words that imitate the natural sounds of an object. For example, bell 'ding ding' car beeping 'horn' phone 'br-r-r-ring' (Thomas, 2004: 19)

## 2. Secondary onomatopoeia (SC)

The secondary onomatopoeia is the sound that occurs because of the relation between the sound of an object and its movement (dither, dodder, quiver, slink, slither, slouch, squirm, and wriggle) or based on the movement only (Ullman, 1962: 84). This onomatopoeia derives from actions. The onomatopoeic words exist in a drawing are considered derive from certain actions if they resemble or suggest that action described in the drawing itself (Alexander, 1963:20). In other words, the secondary onomatopoeia can be called as the sound of onomatopoeic words which is produced by the integration between the sound of an object and action. For instance, sound of eating ‘chomp chomp’ sound of drinking ‘gulp gulp’ collision of other object ‘thum/thud’ collision of metals ‘clang’ (Thomas, 2004: 19)

### Meaning

Cruse (2004:125) states that meaning is regarded as a concept. In his opinion, conceptual thinking helps people to organize and store their knowledge by relating it to other things they know. This research particularly discusses the meaning of word. In line with this, Ullmann describes the meaning of words “The meaning of word is reciprocal and reversible relationship between sound and sense” (Ullman, 1964: 57). In this case, in discussing the meaning of a word, the relationship between the sound and the word cannot be separated. Since this research focuses on the meaning of word, the writer uses lexical (LM) and contextual (CM) meanings to analyze the meaning in this research. By regarding that lexical and contextual meaning are appropriately used to analyze the meaning of words, in discussing meaning, there are two bases of interpretations of meaning in this research. They are lexical and contextual meaning.

Lexical meaning refers to the dictionary definition. A dictionary word is ‘lexeme’. The boun ‘lexeme’ is related to the words ‘lexical’ and ‘lexicon’ (lexicon as having the same meaning as ‘vocabulary’ or ‘dictionary’ (Lyon: 1995: 47). Therefore, lexical meaning can be called the meaning of a word. In other words, lexical meaning refers to the referent that can be observed through the sense. It is the real meaning. For example, rat. Based on the dictionary, the word ‘rat’ refers to a small animal that likes dirty place and can bring dieses of typhus.

On the other hand, the meaning derives from context is called the contextual meaning. It can be said as the meaning of words that are found in particular situations (Ullmann, 1962:64). It might be a reason, justification, assumption, explanation, or other function, of the context. The context of a sound may often provide enough clues to interpret the meaning of onomatopoeic words when they have not yet recorded in dictionaries

### Methodology

There are three steps in conducting this research: collecting the data, analyzing the data and presenting the result of analysis (Sudaryanto, 1993: 5). In collecting the data, I applied non participant observational method which means that I was not involved in the dialogues of the comic’s characters. At this step, there were some procedures applied. Firstly, the comic was downloaded from [www.4shared.com](http://www.4shared.com). I took one edition, the 2006 edition, because it is the best edition of Garfield comic. There are 33 onomatopoeic words found. The data were chosen based on the pictures which contain onomatopoeic words. Then, due to a lot of the similar forms of data, only 15 different onomatopoeic words are described in the analysis. Secondly, the onomatopoeic words were marked and selected from the comic strips by applying note taking technique (Sudaryanto, 1993: 135).

The data are analyzed by applying referential method (Sudaryanto, 1993: 13). Referential method was applied by describing a reference of the onomatopoeic words of the Garfield comics. In analyzing the data, there are some steps followed. Firstly, I categorize the kinds of the onomatopoeic words based on Ullmann's (1962). Secondly, I describe the meanings of the onomatopoeic words. At this step, I identify the meanings following two categories: lexical and contextual meanings. To determine the lexical meaning, I refer to Oxford Dictionary published in 2010. Moreover, to determine the category of the contextual meaning, I apply the theory that was proposed by Ullmann (1962). The results of analysis are presented by using informal and formal methods. The informal method is the way of presenting the findings of analysis by using verbal language, while formal method is a method which is written in the form of symbols and signs. The result of this study is explained in the forms of the arguments or verbal language and supported by using tables. The explanations are then supported by the scanned colorful pictures in order to make them more alive and interesting.

Here are some examples of onomatopoeias described in Donald Duck comic,

#### 1. Primary Onomatopoeia

##### (a) Honk

(Donald Duck, 2005: 1)

The pictures show Donald and John who are waiting for celebrating new year. To celebrate the new year, they prepare a trumpet and a cup of coffee. When the time comes, Donald blows up the trumpet and points the end of the trumpet close to John's ear. John is shocked and very angry because Donald always does the same thing every year. In these pictures, the word honk represents the sound of the trumpet. This word is classified into primary onomatopoeia which represents the sound of an object. According to Ullmann, primary onomatopoeia is the imitation of the sound which is produced by the object itself (1962: 84). It can be seen from the pictures, the sound honk appears as an effect of the blow of the trumpet.

Lexically, honk means 'the noise made by a goose or a car's horn (Hornby, 2010: 652). However, in this strip the word honk in the pictures does not mean the sound produced by a goose or car horn. It is produced by the sound of the trumpet. Therefore, the meaning of honk is derived from the sound of the trumpet. As seen in the picture, Donald blows the trumpet and produces the sound honk. In this case, the meaning of honk also derives from the context of the pictures.

##### (b) Ring

(Donald, 2005: 140)

The pictures show John calls his friend, Mrs. Feeny. When they are talking, suddenly, the sound of telephone is broken. There is something trouble with John's telephone. He cannot hear the sound. He doesn't know why the sound of his telephone is broken. He puts out the telephone. A few minutes later, telephone is ringing again. John picks it up.

The word ring represents the sound of the telephone. Such word is grouped into primary onomatopoeia which represents the sound of object the telephone. The primary onomatopoeia is the imitation of the sound through the sound is produced by object itself (Ullmann, 1962: 84). It can be seen from the pictures when the telephone is ringing, the sound ring occurs. In this case, the sound of ring is the sound occurs as an effect of the sound of the telephone. The sound of ring is produced when the telephone is ringing. The classifying of ring sound is based on the imitation

of the sound which is produced by the sound of an object. According to Oxford Dictionary, the word ring has several meanings such as (1) telephone (2) be full of a sound (2010: 1013). Then based on the pictures, the word ring is the sound which is produced when the telephone is ringing. In this case, there are similarity between the dictionary meaning and the meaning of the pictures. Ring is the sound produced when telephone is ringing. Thus, the meaning of ring refers to lexical Meaning

### Conclusion

There are two kinds of onomatopoeic words found in the Donald Duck comic, the primary and secondary onomatopoeias. The primary is the imitation of the sound of an object and the secondary is the imitation of the combined sounds of an object and its movement. From 15 onomatopoeic words, 10 of them are the secondary. They are cough hack, smack, crash, splat, chomp chew, splosh, sluck, rip tear shred, burp, and shom. The other five primary onomatopoeic words are ring, click, bio bop beep, bonk, and honk. Furthermore, there are all of two kinds of meaning in identifying the onomatopoeic words, lexical and contextual. The lexical meaning refers to the dictionary meaning and the contextual meaning is based on the context of the picture. From 15 data, 11 of them contain lexical meaning (honk, click, cough hack, smack, crash, splat, chomp chew, ring, rip tear shred, burp, bonk) and the rest contain the contextual (splosh, bib boop beep, sluck, shom)

### REFERENCES

- Alexander, L. G. 1993. *Petry and Prose: Appreciation for Overseas Students*. London: longman
- Antilla. R. 1972. *An Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Davis, J. 2006. *Garfield*. United Feature Syndicate: Universal Press Syndicate, Paws, Inc.
- Gasser, M. 2006. *Iconicity and Arbitrariness in Spoken Words*. Retrieved on May, 2011 from <http://www.indiana.edu/~hlw/PhonUnits/Iconicity.html>
- Hock, H. H. 1986. *Principles of Historical Linguistics*. New York: Mouton De Gruyter
- Keller, R. 1998. *A Theory of Linguistics Signs*. UK: Oxford University Press
- Lyon, J. 1995. *Linguistic Semantics: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Mackey, A. And S. M. Gass. 2005. *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Hornby, A. S. 2010. *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English*. UK: Oxford University Press
- Robertson, S. 1954. *The Development of Modern English*. USA: Prentice Hall
- Sudaryanto. 1993. *Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa*. Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana University Press
- Sugahara, T. 2010. "Onomatopoeia in Spoken and Written English: Corpus- and Usage- Based Analysis." Dissertation. Hokkaido: The Graduate School Of Letters. Retrieved on October 2011 from [eprints.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/pdf](http://eprints.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/pdf)
- Takada, M., K. Tanaka and S. I. Iwamiya. 2006. "Relationship Between Auditory Impression And Onomatopoeic Features For Environmental Sounds." *Journal of Acoustical Science and Technology*, Vol. 27, No. 2. Pp. 67-79. Retrieved on October 2011 from

- <http://www.mendeley.com/research/pdf>  
Thomas, T. W. C. and C. H. W. Clara. 2004. "Characteristic of Onomatopoeia." A Paper. Retrieved on October 2011 from [www.thomastsoi.com/research/files/characteristics\\_of\\_Onomatopoeia.pdf](http://www.thomastsoi.com/research/files/characteristics_of_Onomatopoeia.pdf)
- Ullman, S. 1962. Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning. Oxford: Basil Blackwell [http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1108721/Garfied.](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1108721/Garfied) 2001.  
"Garfield." Encyclopedia Britannica