

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach in textual analysis. Studies that employed a descriptive qualitative method attempt to describe phenomena or subjects by using non-numerical data, such as interviews, case studies, or participant observation (Richard and Schmidt, 2002). As such, the novel in this study described a phenomenon of humor which is verbally and visually represented in children novels. Textual analysis of data was employed to show the set of information and ideas that construct the text. It was achieved through a characterization of relations that underlie the organization of the text (Al-Sharafi, 2004). The results of the analysis were presented in the form of narration in addition to tables provided with brief explanations.

#### **3.2 Research Procedure**

The procedure of this study consists of six steps, which are as follows:

1. Selecting a topic

The topic of this study, humor representations in Pilkey's *Captain Underpants and The Attack and The Talking toilets*, was selected based on a concern that humorous books for children are limited in Indonesia. Even though there are humorous books found in Indonesia, the contents of the books are not appropriate to the age of the children readers. By revealing humor representations in a best-selling novel written in the form of picturebooks, this study can contribute to give descriptions in writing appropriate humorous stories, especially, stories that are written in the form of picturebooks.

2. Formulating a research question

In this step, a research question was formulated to be a guide of this study in revealing humor representations in verbal and visual modes in Pilkey's *Captain Underpants and the Attack of the Talking Toilets* (1999).

### 3. Finding related studies

As an attempt to answer the research question, theoretical frameworks and the findings of related studies were collected. The related studies cover studies on multimodality, Halliday's (2004) Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) reading images, and humor in literary study, especially that of Monro (1988).

### 4. Collecting the data

Data of this study were collected by several steps. The first step is selecting participants. The participants were selected to choose the most humorous novel and to identify humorous events in the form of pictures (visual modes) of the chosen novel. In selecting the participants, a purposive sampling method was employed. According to Battaglia (2011), the purposive sampling method produces 'representative' participants of a population by applying knowledge of the population to select in a non random way and decide important characteristics to be presented. In this study, the important characteristics of the participants are those who are involved as the intended readers of the novel and involved in Xeni's (2010) second group of children readers. The participants chosen are school children from class 1 until class 6 and are in range of six until eleven years old. Moreover, by considering the demographic factor, the participants chosen are those who study in SDS Dian Kencana and SDN Tegalega Bandung.

After selecting the participants, the participants were asked to choose the most humorous novel of three novels:

- Pilkey's *Captain Underpants and the Attack of the Talking Toilets* (1999)
- Benton's *Franny K. Stein* (2003)

Susan Santika, 2014

Humor Representations In Pilkey's *Captain Underpants And The Attack Of The Talking Toilets* : A Verbal And Visual Analysis

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia | repository.upi.edu | perpustakaan.upi.edu

- Thaler's *The Author Visit from the Black Lagoon* (2010)

The three humorous novels were selected based on the same genre (i.e humorous), the same theme (i.e adventurous), the same form of writing (i.e in the form of picturebooks and written in English), the average thickness of the novels (i.e not more than one hundred and fifty pages), and the ages of the intended readers (i.e children in range of six until eleven or twelve years old).

Moreover, the three novels were written by author-illustrators (i.e authors who illustrate their own books). By choosing picturebooks created by author-illustrators,

[it] helps to control for variation in text type and author's purpose, since it is hard to determine whether or not an author and an illustrator working on the same text have the same goals and purposes for that particular text. [Besides, it] simply narrows down the vast list of possible picturebooks to include in such a study (Gerrard, 2008, p. 47).

There were nine participants who chose *Captain Underpants* as the most humorous book. Then, the participants who chose *Captain Underpants* were gathered to identify humorous events in the form of pictures (visual modes) of the novel.

The humorous events in the form of visual modes chosen by the participants were collected and were juxtaposed with humorous events in verbal modes that appeared on the same page (see Appendix 2). If a picture was accompanied by verbal modes that did not contain humorous events, the picture was not included to be analyzed.

## 5. Analyzing the data

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the visual modes were not dependent on the verbal modes so that both modes should be analyzed. In other words, the procedure of this analysis is called multimodality (Hermawan, 2013).

Multimodal analysis enables the verbal and visual modes to be analyzed by using Halliday's (2004) transitivity analysis in Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) and Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) representational meanings in reading images. Transitivity structures are adapted by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) to

Susan Santika, 2014

Humor Representations In Pilkey's *Captain Underpants And The Attack Of The Talking Toilets* : A Verbal And Visual Analysis

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia | repository.upi.edu | perpustakaan.upi.edu

be applied in visual analysis. Therefore, transitivity structures in SFG are equal to narrative and conceptual representations of representational structures in reading images (Hermawan, 2013; Andrade and de Oliveira Pimenta, 2011; Guijarro A. J., 2010; Motta-Roth and Nascimento, 2009; Guijarro and Pinar Sanz, 2008; Royce, 1999).

Both transitivity structures and representational structures reveal processes and participants involved in the processes. However, the difference lies in naming terms used in both structures. For example, participants in transitivity structures are called *participants*; meanwhile, participants in representational structures are called *represented participants*.

Transitivity analysis is usually employed in analyzing non literary text. However, it can be employed in analyzing literary work. In terms of analyzing humor in a novel, there are three types of humor proposed by Monro (1988) which are superiority, incongruity, and relief. The three types of humor are related to power relations between characters in a novel (Lin and Tan, 2010; Bardon, 2005). The analysis of transitivity in literary work can reveal power relations (Bilal, 2012; Gallardo, 2006). It shows who has more power of doing actions, and how this power is realized through the processes.

Moreover, Díaz (2014) adds that processes identified in transitivity analysis help to confirm the relationship between power and violence in narrative. The relationship between power and violence can produce humor. The violence here refers to actions done by either inferior characters or superior characters in the narrative that aim to make others suffer misfortunes. Both superior and inferior characters who do actions are considered as having power.

The characters in *Captain Underpants* are portrayed as powerful vs. non-powerful through their actions. Powerful characters are those who carry out actions in the narrative. Their actions are realized through verbs. Power that is distributed among the characters and that allows the characters to do (actions performed by whom and to whom they affect) shows representations of humor in the narrative. According to Ross (cited in Hassan, 2013), superior character as powerful characters can be the target of humor. In other words, the inferior

Susan Santika, 2014

Humor Representations In Pilkey's *Captain Underpants And The Attack Of The Talking Toilets* : A Verbal And Visual Analysis

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia | repository.upi.edu | perpustakaan.upi.edu

characters are not always the target of humor. It is because humor also refers to an attack on characters in superior positions of power as the fight back of the victim.

In this study, the analysis of processes and participants in transitivity and representational meanings is essential to show the relationship between power, violence, and characters that produce humor in *Captain Underpants*. An example of verbal modes analyzed in transitivity analysis can be seen in this following table.

Table 3.1 Transitivity analysis of the verbal modes

No	Verbal Modes					
1.		Come	and	See	our hairy armpits	
		material		behavioural	range	

Meanwhile, an example of visual modes analyzed in representational meanings can be seen in this following table.

Table 3.2 Representational meanings of the visual modes

No.	Visual Modes	Narrative Representations	Conceptual Representations
1.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-transactional action</li> <li>• Vector : the road running diagonally across the image space (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006)</li> <li>• Actor : George and Harold skateboarding on the road</li> <li>• Goal : unclear, but the short lines behind George and Harold imply that the funny words on the advertisement board are made by them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• covert taxonomy</li> <li>• carrier : George and Harold</li> <li>• attribute : George – a tidy haircut, a shirt, a tie, short pants, a skateboard, socks and shoes, Harold – a bad haircut, a t-shirt, short pants, a skateboard, socks and shoes</li> <li>• symbolic attributive : George – a tidy student</li> </ul>

Susan Santika, 2014

Humor Representations In Pilkey's *Captain Underpants And The Attack Of The Talking Toilets* : A Verbal And Visual Analysis

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia | repository.upi.edu | perpustakaan.upi.edu

			Harold – an untidy student
--	--	--	----------------------------

## 6. Drawing conclusions

Conclusions were drawn regarding the findings of the study. Recommendations for further studies on multimodality and humor were also provided.

### 3.3 Synopsis

The objects of this study were humorous events in Pilkey’s *Captain Underpants and the Attack of the Talking Toilets* (1999). Written in the form of picturebooks, this novel contains verbal and visual modes of narrative sequences as the source of data. The novel tells about Captain Underpants who fought against talking toilets. The talking toilets came from a machine invented to compete in an annual Invention Convention. The machine called Patsy 2000 could make any one-dimensional image alive to be a living, breathing, three-dimensional copy of that image. Accidentally, George and Harold the main characters of the novel, threw their talking toilets comic into Patsy 2000. The talking toilets were alive and attacked people in their school. Captain Underpants who fought the talking toilets were eaten by Turbo Toilet 2000, the biggest talking toilet. Then, George and Harold drew an image of The Incredible Robo-Plunger to save Captain Underpants. In the end of the narrative, The Incredible Robo-Plunger won the fight against Turbo Toilet 2000, and Captain Underpants together with people who were eaten by Turbo Toilet 2000 could be saved.

