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Crowdsourcing and Relay Translation of Manga: An Analysis The Special One-shot Death Note Never Complete

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Introduction

This thesis analyses an Italian crowdsourced translation of *Death Note: Special One-Shot*. It is an indirect or relay translation as it was done from the English official translation available on the website of the publishing company Shueisha. The special one-shot was displayed during the Never Complete exhibition held in Japan in 2019 and the Japanese source text was then published with another title in February 2021 in a collection of short stories. Since the official Italian translation has not been released yet and a previous one-shot was released in 2008, the 2020 one-shot is also known as 'Death Note Never Complete' by the Italian public.

Since my university carrier as a master student of Modern Languages for International Communication and Cooperation is drawing to a close, I decided to focus my thesis on Translation Studies and to research on the translation of comics. This thesis focuses particularly on manga, i.e. Japanese comic books, which have some peculiar characteristics which are outlined in Chapter one. Translation is a means which gives the opportunity to discover another culture, thanks to it different essays, news, books, and multimedia products can be enjoyed by people who do not have any knowledge of the source language in which these products have been created. Similarly, reading allows the public to enter the authors' artistic worlds and to discover other cultures and viewpoints, e.g. manga allows readers to start uncovering Asian culture. Japanese comics — like western ones — are forms of art which convey messages through both verbal and visual languages. However, the same way verbal communication differs, Asian and western visual languages have different characteristics. Therefore, it is worth analysing briefly the Japanese visual language used in manga, since Japanese comics differ from their western counterparts. Hence, before translating or reading a manga, those visual elements which differ or have a different meaning from the ones depicted in western comics should be carefully investigated.

As regards the structure of this thesis, I chose to organize it into three chapters, each chapter divided into different sections. The first chapter is entitled "Manga and its impact on western countries" and investigates manga and anime as products and their impact on western countries, especially the United States, United Kingdom, and Italy, because the languages involved in the translation process are English and Italian. More specifically, this chapter includes seven sections, the first is titled "Anime, manga and

graphic novel" and aims to identify these three different products which are often confused by people who join this booming market for the first time. The second "What is *manga?"* is specifically on Japanese comics and describes them and their genres. The third "Differences between Japanese and Western comics" focuses on the differences between western comics and Japanese ones. "A brief overview on manga history" is the heading of the fourth section, which briefly studies manga history. The fifth is entitled "Anime and manga in the USA and the UK" and analyses the completely different impact of anime and manga on the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The sixth is "Anime and manga in Italy" and studies the reception of anime and manga in Italy. The last section of Chapter one is "*Death Note"* and provides pieces of information on the publication of this bestselling Japanese comic and of the one-shot analysed in Chapter three.

Chapter two is entitled "Comics translation, relay translation, and crowdsourcing" and focuses on comics translation, relay, indirect, and support translation, and crowdsourcing. This chapter is divided into three main sections, the first one is entitled "Comics translation" and its purpose is to investigate how professional translators work, analysing specific aspects of comics translation, i.e. the translation of the linguistic paratext, sound effects, humour, culture-specific items and references, and proper names. The second section, "Relay, indirect and support translation", aims to provide a definition of these types of translation, following Dollerup's (2000) study. The third section is "Crowdsourcing" and covers an online phenomenon related to translation, i.e. crowdsourcing, a recent ongoing online phenomenon which concerns translators and their profession, because the Italian translation was done and distributed online by a fan translation group. In this section some translation strategies and techniques adopted by professional translators are compared to the ones used by non-professional translators. This topic is particularly interesting because translation as a profession has undergone a series of changes due to the development of the Internet, computers, and cutting-age technologies. The number of fan translation groups which translate and distribute manga and anime online has boomed. Finally, Chapter three on "Translation analysis" is divided into different sections that describe how the translation was done. The categories analysed are the ones outlined in Chapter two and Mossop's (2020) revision parameters are adopted to identify translation problems and difficulties.

Chapter one

Manga and its impact on western countries

1.1 Anime, manga, and graphic novels

Anime, manga, and graphic novels each refer to three different products, which share some characteristics, and — maybe, due to their similarities — they are often mixed or confused, especially by people who approach this booming market for the first time. The terms "manga" and "anime" are often used interchangeably (Chambers, 2012: 95). Many instances of the use of these terms as synonyms can be found in western events or advertisements, e.g. the Toei film studios ran animation seasons, yet held some festivals called the Toei Manga Festivals in the 1970s and 1980s, leading some people to confuse the products they sold, i.e. anime series with manga. In the 1990s the marketing campaign of the British distributor Manga Video was even more problematic because in this campaign manga was referred to as a subset of anime (Bainbridge and Norris, 2010: 237). For this reason, after briefly introducing the question with some examples, the purpose of this section is to investigate the three terms and look for brief definitions which can help in the identification of the products.

According to the definition offered by Zanettin (2009: 38), manga are Japanese comics which have developed their own distinctive style and peculiar reading conventions, including a vast range of genres aimed at different readerships. Comics are a form of sequential arts where both visual and verbal languages generate meanings (Celotti, 2014: 35). Sequential drawings which are ordered by a ruled system are a visual language (Cohn, 2010:187). Hence, both Japanese and western comics combine visual with written language, but the unique cultural style of drawing makes the visual languages used in Japanese and western comics two different languages, in the same way as Japanese differ from English, for instance. For this reason, it is worth highlighting that the word *manga* outside Japan has actually two meanings; one designates the sociocultural artefact, and the other refers to the actual visual language used in manga, i.e. manga aesthetics. Despite the notions that the word *manga* expresses, the specific term "Japanese Visual Language" is used to describe the particular graphic system of communication.

Anime is a Japanese form of animated feature, and the term comes from the English word "animation" (Draper, 2015: 7). In addition, anime series are usually made from manga (Johnson-Woods, 2010: 2); *Naruto, One Piece* and *Dragon Ball* are three outstanding examples of Japanese comics which have become anime. This close relationship may lead people to confuse the two products since their plot is the same, but manga are comics and anime are animated series or cartoons. There are also many differences between the anime which are based on a manga and the original manga, even if the author and the anime director are the same person. These differences are due to the fact that there are different television constraints. The differences are fairly common, especially when the anime series are adapted from a long running Japanese comic book (Draper, 2015: 9).

By contrast, García (2015: 3) defines graphic novel as a particular kind of modern comic book aimed at adults which demands a different attitude and reading from a traditional one. Zanettin (2014: 7) adds that graphic novels are usually longer than North American comics and are printed on good-quality paper with good, glittering full colours. Furthermore, they are usually published as stand-alone volumes. To sum up, anime are broadcast on television or on streaming platforms like Crunchyroll, while manga and graphic novels are books which can also be available in digital editions.

In conclusion, anime, manga and graphic novels are three distinct products, although they may share some similarities. A simple and brief description of anime and graphic novel is useful, but a more detailed and complete description of manga is required for the translation analysis which is the main objective of this dissertation. For this reason, in the following sections, manga is properly investigated through the analysis of the product, its history and, eventually, its impact on western countries, particularly the UK, the USA and Italy.

1.2 What is *manga*?

According to the definition provided in the former section, it is possible to affirm that manga are Japanese comics, but they have distinctive and salient characteristics which show a difference between western and eastern comics (see section 1.3).

The comics industry has gained increasing popularity in Europe first, especially in Italy, France and Belgium, and then in the rest of the world, most notably in Argentina

and in Japan, where it has experienced a steady growth in sales since World War II, thus becoming the largest comics industry in the world (Zanettin, 2009: 38). In this respect, Tony Johnson-Woods (2010: 1) specifies that over the past two decades manga has become the new comic-book art format due to an increase in the sales of translated manga. The translation of manga from Japanese into other Asian languages started in the 1960s and in the 1980s Japanese comics also started being translated into some western languages; eventually, since the 1990s, translated manga have begun circulating globally. Furthermore, Japanese comic books have gradually caught the general public's attention thanks to anime, which have increasingly been translated and broadcast worldwide.

In order to analyse in-depth this increasingly popular eastern product and the reasons why it attracts the westerners' attention, Johnson-Woods (2010: 2) accurately defines manga as

> a visual narrative with recognizable "sensibility". The term *sensibility* is intentionally vague in order to cover a multitude of options and embraces the stereotypical big-eyed, pointy chinned characters that many people consider the epitome of manga, the Disneyesque style of Ozamu Tezuka, and the realistic style of corporate manga. Not all manga looks the same and not all manga has the same philosophical issue or the same readership. If it calls himself manga, then it is a manga.

Consequently, it is complex to provide a unique and precise definition of manga without bearing in mind the different genres, readerships, and huge variety of artists' original style of drawing. Nevertheless, in manga some recurrent characteristics are easy to identify, e.g. the Asian reading orientation, which is from right to left, or the character's stereotypically big eyes. Another of those recurrent characteristics is that manga is commonly sold in two formats: manga magazine and *tankōbon* (literally "single book"), i.e. "a collection of several previously published manga chapters in paperback book form" (Malone, 2010: 322). Manga magazines share their main features with serialized novels and superheroes pulps, contain various serialized stories and have their own target readership (Johnson-Woods, 2010: 3). They are in black and white, as colour is used just to signal the beginning of another story, and are printed on recycled paper, which is why their paper quality is poor and publishers prefer not to add colour. Among some of the most famous manga magazines, *Monthly Comic Blade*, *Weekly Morning* and *Gangan Comics* are the most outstanding examples. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that *Gangan Comics* is owned by one of the leading Japanese video game holding companies,

i.e. Square Enix. Successful serialized manga, like *Death Note,* are published in *tankōbon,* which is a top-quality format.

The stories told in a manga vary significantly from readership to readership and a single manga can deal with different topics; therefore, it can cover different genres. This explains why classifying manga through genres is a challenging task. However, Johnson-Woods (2010: 8) maintains that genres are useful labels in order to classify manga, even though they may not be perfectly accurate because of the complicated and exquisitely detailed plots developed in Japanese comics. Editors deliberately target certain readerships in their anthologies. Manga genres are generally dictated by the anthology in which they are published, because trying to describe all the existing genres would be extremely complex. Johnson-Woods (2010: 7-8) further suggests a list of genres which are commonly used by editors. The best known four basic manga genres which depend on readerships are s*hōnen, shōjo, seinen* and *josei*: *shōnen* mangaare aimed at teenage boys, *shōjo* manga are intended for teenage girls,*seinen* manga are written for men, while *josei* is the term used to name manga that are written for women because their plots focus on adult women's issues as wives or office workers. However, there are many more terms related to manga and their genres, e.g. *geika manga*, which are intended for adults and explore serious topics, *kodomo,* which are intended for children, *mecha*, where the main characters are robots and transformers, *dōjinshi*, which are written by amateurs or fans and can cover different topics, and *hentai*, which are pornographic comics. To conclude the list of genres, *yuri* or *shōjo-ai* are about girl love stories, while *yaoi* or *shōnen-ai* deal with male love stories and are aimed at women. In addition, manga can also be classified by using broader and traditional categories such as romance, science fiction, drama, and fantasy (Johnson-Woods, 2010: 18). Over the time, some meanings and terms may differ and a change in their use can occur whether they are used in Japan or the United States. It is because of this multigenerational aspect of manga that it can embrace different genres and Japan can promote its products easily (Draper, 2015: 8).

As far as the physical structure, the organisation, and the target readerships of Japanese comics are concerned, Johnson-Woods claims (2010: 6) that the narrative flow of a manga is complex to follow because of the different page layout, the visual aesthetics, which includes a wide variety of frames, the highly detailed background, and cinematic angles. However, not only do these features make the reading complicated to a western

reader, but also the toning, shading, and inking produce differing effects which — added to the high number of details drawn in a page — can be confusing to the eye. In this respect, Cohn (2010: 199) affirms that many psychology studies reveal that adults who have been reading manga manage to reconstruct a series of panels more quickly than younger readers and show that the performance improved with experience in manga reading. The eye movement of expert manga readers is smoother, and they focus more on the pieces of information which are to be found in the images, whereas non-experts make erratic eye movements among the panels of the page, spending more time reading words. Furthermore, it seems that manga reading has positive effects on education because it improves Japanese children's creativity (Cohn, 2010: 200).

Japanese comics differ from western ones especially for cultural reasons, the themes and topics developed in the plots, the labels used to identify them, and for more practical reasons, i.e. the publication format. Manga are sold in both magazines and *tankōbon* and must be read following the Japanese reading orientation. However, Japanese and western comics share some relevant features, and their differences and similarities will be outlined in the next section.

1.3 Differences between Japanese and western comics

Japanese comics differ from western ones in many ways because both have their own distinctive style and some outstanding characteristics that make them unique. Firstly, they have different origins, because manga are Japanese products which have grown in popularity in the late 20th century, whereas western comics were born at the end of the 19th century in the USA (Zanettin, 2014: 1). However, there are many more differences and even some similarities which are worth investigating carefully.

One substantial difference between Japanese manga and western comics is the Asian reading orientation: manga are read from back to front and right to left and readers' eyes move through the comic's page or strip within a page following the reading orientation of their language, while western languages are read left to right and top to bottom. So, readers apply their "mode of reading to the sequential images of comics" (Theisen, 2015: 82). How eyes move across panels of the American comic *Mickey Mouse Adventures* (see Figure 1.1) does not need to be explained to English readers because they automatically follow the orthography of their language. The first panel is bigger because

it shows Goofy and Mickey Mouse fishing and contains the title of the story, the second one depicts an orange dinosaur running. In the third panel the two characters are talking and in the fourth one Dr. Einmung asks them if they saw Ralph. In the fifth panel the three characters are looking for Ralph, the orange dinosaur.

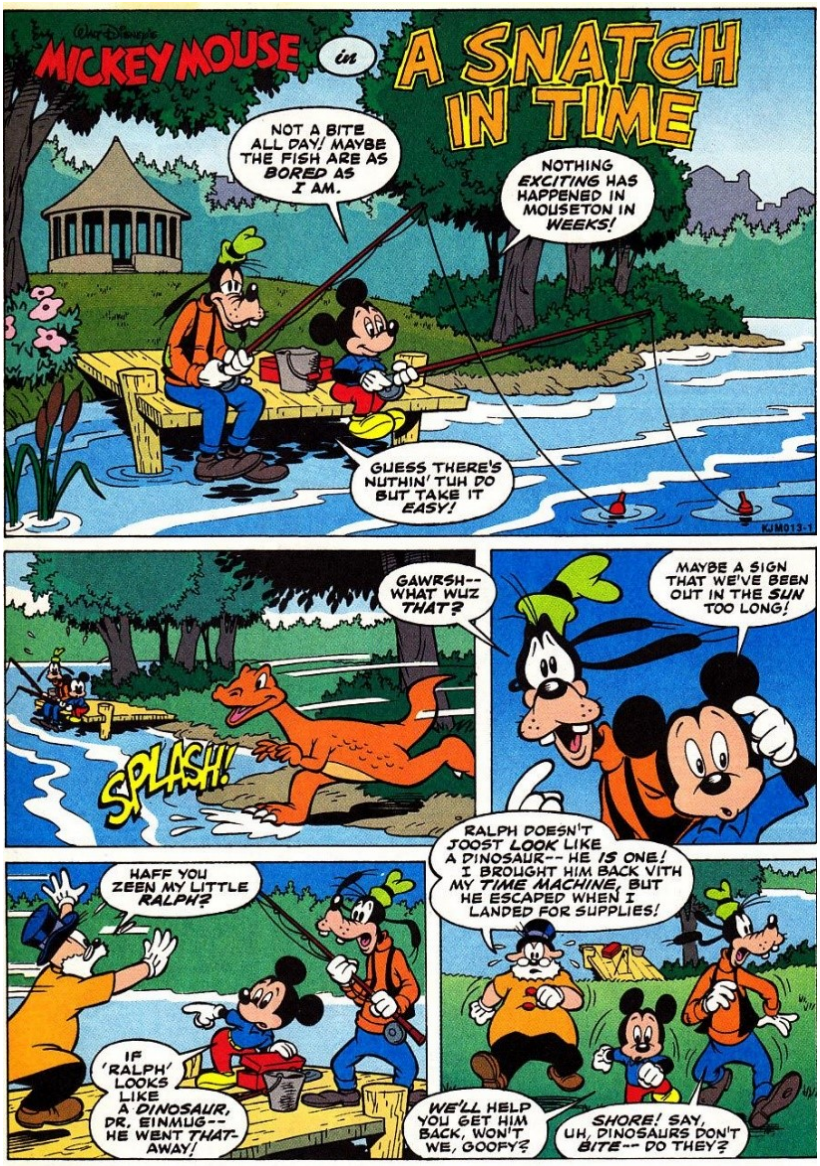


Figure 1.1. This figure shows how to read western comics [Walt Disney, 1991].

Therefore, in the first panel one reads the title of the chapter "Mickey Mouse in a Snatch in Time", then Mickey Mouse's speech bubbles and Goofy's one. In the third panel Goofy is the first character to talk. In the fourth one, Dr. Einmug asks a question and Mickey Mouse replies. In the last panel, the order in which speech bubbles should be read is Dr. Einmug's, then Mickey Mouse's, and Goofy's one.

By contrast, in Japanese there are no necessary orthographic assumptions because it can be written or printed in any number of ways and its orthographic flexibility allows manga illustrators to explore a huge variety of formal layouts (Theisen, 2015: 83). Since Japanese language writing usually goes from top to bottom and adopts vertical characters, speech bubbles in manga are taller than western ones (Rampant, 2010: 223). Nowadays Japanese reading orientation is kept in translated manga; therefore, western readers necessarily modify their reading habits. A page from the bestseller *One Piece* (see Figure 1.2) is provided to explain how a translated manga should be read.

Figure 1.2. This figure shows how to read translated manga [Oda, 1997].

The first panel depicts a pirate ship anchored off the bay of an uncharted island and its pirate flag is drawn in the second panel. The third panel shows an index finger of a woman wiping the dust from the side of the ship. The woman is Lady Alvida and is the captain.

In the following panel she asks why there is dust on her bulwark, so in the fifth panel an afraid pirate apologises to her and promises to clean everything all over again. The order in which the speech bubbles should be read is from right to left and from top to bottom, e.g. in the fifth panel the first speech bubble is "A thousand pardons, Lady Alvida!!", the second "I-I thought I'd cleaned every inch of this ship…!!", the third "I'll clean everything all over again! Please--!", and the last contains the words of the angry captain ""Please" what…?". The reading orientation is crucial in the creation of meaning, which comes from the transitions of the panels and the relationship among images (Cohn 2010: 194).

To better understand this concept, a brief explanation of the role of transitions and panels in comics is required. Cohn (2010: 195) cites for instance the various types of transition identified by McCloud (1993), explaining that moment-to-moment transition shows a short amount of time passing, action-to-action transition depicts a whole action taking place, subject-to-subject transition implies a shift from character to character, and similarly, scene-to-scene transition includes a shift between two different environments. In aspect-to-aspect transition there is a change in time in order to show aspects of the environment; in non-sequitur, there is a lack of logical relationship between panels. Analysing these transitions both in western and Japanese comics, it is possible to point out the prevalence of action, subject, and scene transitions in American comics. Nevertheless, the influence of manga on American comics has introduced some moment transitions and high numbers of aspect transitions, which were otherwise absent.

As regards panels, Cohn (2010: 197) states that four types of panels exist and vary depending on how much information they contain. In macro panels, the author depicts a whole scene or multiple characters; in mono panels, the author shows only individual entities; micro panels do not contain a whole entity, just a part of it; polymorphic panels include more than one whole action. In polymorphic panels, artists achieve an image which contains more than one whole action through the repetition of individual characters which are represented at various points in that event. The use of these panels varies in American and Japanese comics. American artists use more polymorphic and macro panels, whereas Japanese artists prefer mono and micro panels.

With respect to the inner structure, the frames in manga are not always neat rectangles; consequently, they are not lined up equidistantly and the number of lines in a

page can thus vary (Johnson-Woods, 2010: 5). North American adventure strips have their own narrative structure, in which the first panel usually recalls the previous day's episode and the last panel introduces an element of suspense (Zanettin, 2014: 7). From a visual point of view, Italian comic books are largely rendered in black and white and Johnson-Woods (2010: 5) affirms that the same occurs in Japanese comics and only the most popular ones can have a colour version. By contrast, American comics are generally colourful.

As far as the style of drawing is concerned, in Japanese Visual Language manga artists draw characters in a recognizable pattern, because they depict them with stereotypical big eyes, bushy hair, small mouth and pointed chin (Cohn, 2010: 188). This conventional and stereotypical style of drawing ensures both conventionality and iconicity. Although many styles of drawing exist given the huge number of artists, a conventionalized manner of drawing manga can be easily spotted. Cohn (2010: 189) finds the origin of manga style in Osamu Tezuka's work, who took his inspiration from Disney drawings. This peculiar style of drawing eventually changed and evolved, thus becoming standard and globally recognised. Possibly, it is because of manga artists' systematic and repetitive style of drawing that Japanese comics have become so widespread across the world. So, Japanese Visual Language is easy to identify because the community of artists that uses this visual language shares a common graphic vocabulary which depends on the target readers, the same way writers choose words and terms which are more suitable for the context and their readership. For this reason, Cohn (2010: 190) states that the type of publication and their target audience establish the style, e.g. *shōnen manga* tend to have a more angular style, whereas *shōjo* are more rounded. *Chibi* style is easy to distinguish because characters are represented as short and cute. In addition, manga aesthetics embraces various kind of drawing techniques, which can be mixed up in a page (Johnson-Woods, 2010: 6). By contrast, in the 1930s North American comics were drawn with a realistic style (Zanettin, 2014: 2).

Generally, words play a crucial role in western comics, while they are less prominent in Japanese comics (Johnson-Woods, 2010: 6). Accordingly, Cohn (2010: 198) affirms that manga use less text than American comics do because manga artists place more interest in the visual. As a matter of fact, Johnson-Woods (2010: 6) underlines the importance of visual elements and affirms that manga rely mainly on visual cues and

adopt cinematic techniques, e.g. close ups and freeze frames. Not only are visual elements important in manga, but also sound effects, which are easy to achieve on paper thanks to the onomatopoeia of the Japanese language. In this respect, Matsui (2009: 16) adds that manga contain an abundance of sound effects which are difficult to translate.

Delforouz *et al*. (2018: 101) suggest that in comics there are interactions between texts and pictorial elements through blending and collaborating. Blending occurs when both visual and verbal elements merge in the same sign to create messages; whereas collaboration occurs when the visual and the verbal elements remain distinct from one another yet collaborate to convey messages. Words are considered subordinate to images, since in comics readers catch meanings from both verbal and other non-verbal components, especially from drawings (Zanettin, 2009: 39). However, words and balloons have graphic substance, form, colour, and layout which make them an integral part of the drawing and through their modulation they are used to represent and evoke feelings (Zanettin, 2014: 13; Rota, 2014: 79). Fonts are relevant because they can be used to provide information on the origins of a character, e.g. old Germanic fonts stand for Goths, or hieroglyphics indicate that a character is Egyptian, and capital letters in dialogues are used to suggest that a character is talking loudly, shouting or screaming (Delforouz, *et al*. 2018: 102).

Cohn (2010: 188) provides the definitions of different kinds of signs to explain the graphic system of communication. Iconic signs resemble what they mean and, for this reason, are almost universally intelligible, i.e. the drawing of a flower means flower because it depicts the characteristics of a flower. A pointing index finger is an example of indexical sign because indexical signs are signs which convey meaning by an indicative or causative relation. Symbolic signs express meaning through cultural agreement. Mixed signs can combine many different elements. Furthermore, Cohn (2010:191) maintains that in manga some signs go beyond mere iconic representation, depicting invisible qualities such as emotions or motion. Visual symbols are used metaphorically in *shōjo manga* to set a particular mood, which depends on the characters' emotions, e.g. through pastiches of flowers or sparkling lights in the background. In spite of the conventionality of some sings, conventional graphic emblems are not always transparent because they are mostly culture-bound; e.g. fire is an element usually connected to anger in manga, a representation of this negative feeling that is quite common also in other cultures.

However, in Japanese comics, other images which depict other feelings and emotions are difficult to catch for western readers; e.g., lust is represented by bloody noses, sexual thoughts are indicated by the lengthening of the area between the nose and lips, or a spontaneous lack of seriousness is shown by a change in the character's body, which takes on a hyper-cartoony or deformed style. Another difference between American and Japanese Visual language is given by kinetic motion lines. In mid-to late 20th century American and Japanese authors used very different strategies (Cohn, 2010: 192). American artists showed movements through lines trailing the moving object, whereas Japanese artists represented the moving object statically with lines streaming behind it (Cohn, 2010: 193).

As regards readerships, Zanettin (2014: 2) specifies that in the United States comics were directed at both children and adults, as in Japan. On the contrary, Europeans perceived comics exclusively as children's literature, and the aim of European comics was to educate rather than entertain. However, from the 1960s the European readership of comics began to widen, including adults and young teenagers, thanks to the translation of American comics and the spread of national comics dealing with other topics such as crime, horror, and pornography; obviously, these publications were not aimed at children (Zanettin, 2014: 3). Nowadays there are many readers of comics because many different genres exist; yet in the United States male young readers are the main target, whereas in Japan, it is impossible to determine a main target readership because of the extremely developed system of genres (Zanettin, 2014: 7).

Besides the huge variety of genres, the format in which comics are published changes depending on the country in which the comic is released. In this respect, in the United States comics are published in newspapers and in comic books while in Italy the preferred formats are magazines and comic books. To be more precise, in Italy the current most popular format is called *bonelli*, which comes from the name of the major Italian comic book publisher, Sergio Bonelli Editore, while in France the most common format is the hard bound, large (A4) paper size album (Zanettin, 2014: 8). In Japan manga are published in two formats, which are *tankōbon* or B5 manga magazines. In addition, about their length Zanettin (2014: 9) maintains that Japanese comics count more pages than western comics because their series are longer.

1.4 A brief overview on manga history

Contexts, contents, and techniques are relevant features in studying manga history because they show the development of Japanese comics culture, underlying the confluence of the traditional national graphic narratives and the United States influences. It is difficult to identify manga origins: probably manga ancestors are the printed narrative scrolls, called *emakimono*, more precisely the satirical black and white four *Chô-jûgiga* picture scrolls of the 12th century (Bouissou, 2010: 19). However, manga origins could be found in *Eingakyo*, an anonymous fully-coloured scroll of the 8th century. This would be a more accurate ancestor because in this scroll images are mixed with text, whereas the *Chô-jûgiga* scrolls have no text added to the drawings. Among the contents which were largely depicted in the scrolls and that have then been retaken in manga many vulgar contents can be found, e.g. aristocrats, priests, and warriors are mocked and portrayed as rude, impolite, and churlish men; and supernatural monsters, including good-natured devilish creatures, and their relationships with human beings (Bouissou, 2010: 18). In this regard, *yôkai* or supernatural monsters were depicted in many sketches and drawings like *Hyakki Yôkai* which is a scroll of the 15th century.

As regards techniques, Bouissou (2010: 18) claims that from a graphical point of view scrolls are the first pillar of the traditional Japanese graphic narration. Despite the many similarities that can be identified in contemporary manga and *emakimono* scrolls. Japanese culture boasts an enduring tradition of graphic narration which includes *emakimono* scrolls — whose production grew exponentially, especially during the Edo period (1603-1867) — and other art media mixing drawings with texts. A relationship has also been established between modern manga and the urban culture of the Edo period and the various forms of entertainment of this historical era, such as woodblock prints, the *Kabuki* theatre, popular illustrated novels, and the *ukiyo-e* industry, which developed in pleasure quarters (Bouissou, 2010: 20). Therefore, it is possible to identify many correlations and links which relate contemporary manga to past forms of Japanese graphic narration and, more generally, to Japanese arts.

The encounter of Japan with the West during late 19th century helped to create what nowadays is called manga (Bouissou, 2010: 21). In particular, western printing technology and the spread of illustrated magazines for western expatriates introduced the western style of satirical drawings in Japan. Two kinds of Japanese illustrated magazines

came out: *nishiki-eshimbun*, which told stories of gruesome murders and vengeful ghosts, and satirical magazines with strong political overtones, which directed jibes at both authorities and establishment and were usually harassed by censorship (Bouissou, 2010: 22). Both these types of magazines were illustrated by artists who had worked for the *ukiyo-e* industry and who, from an artistic point of view, were famous for using brushes and black ink when drawing. In the United States in the middle of the 1890s, supplements featuring cartoons which included balloons and were drawn in frames started being added to newspapers once a week. This practice was soon replicated by Japanese newspapers. In 1900 the leading reformist Fukuzawa Yukichi introduced in his newspaper, *Jiji Shimpô,* a supplement called *Jiji Manga*. This was the first time that the term *manga* was used in the title of a publication, even though it has more ancient origins which can be found in the late 18th century when this term was used to refer to sketches "made for fun or out of a sudden inspiration" and was then usually translated as "derisory pictures" (Bouissou, 2010: 22). Manga were at the same time used as a means of political expression and a form of mass entertainment; thus, already in the Taisho era (1912-1926), Japanese comics were considered worthy of being studied by academics and began being criticised (Bouissou, 2010: 23).

From the beginning, the mainstream Japanese publishing power houses entered the manga business turning it into a mass industry. In 1914, the leading Japanese publishing powerhouse *Kodansha* launched a manga magazine titled *Shônen Kurabu,* which included comics aimed at teenage boys; in 1923, the company published a manga magazine, *Shôjo Kurabu*, for teenage girls; in 1926, it gave birth to the manga magazine *Yônen Kurabu,* which was intended for children (Bouissou, 2010: 23). In this period, *mangaka,* i.e. Japanese artists who work on manga, were largely inspired by Disney and other western comics, yet managed to create innovative comics with a peculiar style of drawing and original plots (Bouissou, 2010: 24). In the interwar period, the sales of manga by-products increased considerably: manga were turned into movies and their main characters became marketing items, e.g. the not exemplary soldier black dog Norakuro. However, from the 1930s, after an attack to the then Prime Minister of Japan Hamaguchi Ôsachi and the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, censorship was strengthened and manga supported the war efforts, dealing with military themes and propaganda. War became the central topic, and many popular characters experienced a dramatical change

in their behaviour, e.g. Norakuro became a brave dog which routed cowardly pigs that embodied the Chinese population. Japanese animation underwent the same process of censorship and changed its topics. Meanwhile, *Superman* (1938) by Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel and *The Bat-Man* (1939) by Bob Kane were released in the United States, starting the Golden Age of American comics (Zanettin, 2018). During World War II the Japanese government banned western animation and started making animated propaganda; the most popular anime were *Momotarō no Umiwashi* (*Momotaro's Sea Eagles*) and its sequel *Momotarō: Umi no Shinpei* (*Momotaro: Divine Sea Warriors*) (Draper, 2015: 11).

After World War II, it was the Kodansha industry that strongly promoted manga market and consequently experienced a profitable, global expansion. In 1947, the first *kindai manga*, or modern manga, appeared for the first time with the publication of *Shin takarajima* (*The New Treasure Island*) by Osamu Tezuka, who introduced many innovations, notably in graphic techniques and long complex plot lines (Bouissou, 2010: 25). Osamu Tezuka is the father of modern manga who revolutionised comics conventions by introducing a new drawing and narrative style inspired by the techniques of US animated cartoons (Zanettin, 2018). Many modern manga artists of the first generation grew up during the years of World War II and were traumatized by what they lived during the war, so they brought their personal trauma in their works. In particular, the elements which were introduced included: adult failure, the destruction of the world, the survival of a group of optimistic friends, the *mecha* genre, which involves teenagers who drive combat robots and save Japan or the world from brutal attacks by non-human beings, and *kagaku bôken*, i.e. a genre dealing with scientific adventures. In addition, Bouissou (2010: 25) affirms that new ideals were also added such as freedom and democracy, which had emerged during the United States military occupation. In the post-war period two manga forms caught people's attention: the series for children which showed a Disneyesque style were published by Tokyo's major publishing companies, and *akabon* which were published in the Osaka area and dealt with social drama and inadmissible and shameful human passions, e.g. incest and necrophilia. The term *geika* was later coined to indicate the genre which deals with these controversial themes.

Manga succeeded because they covered various topics and themes, thus reaching a wide audience (Bouissou, 2010: 26). It was for financial reasons that manga artists started dealing with a great number of topics and themes, satisfying the audience's

demands and following new ideals. Children who grew up reading manga kept on buying comics which were aimed at teenagers and at adults, so Japanese comics industry reached an overwhelming success. In 1968, manga artists portrayed students' rebellious spirit; as a result, even Japanese comics aimed at students started dealing with taboos, e.g. sex and provocative, vulgar themes. In this period, manga artists in *shōnen* dealt with the fear of a comeback of militarism and depicted stories of young boys who manage to escape borstal and emancipate themselves; e.g. in *Ashita no Jô* by Chibo Tetsuya the protagonist escapes school and becomes a world boxing champion (Bouissou, 2010: 27). In the 1970s, the number of female manga artists grow considerably, thanks to an increase in the number of grown-up female manga readers. Since the 1970s women mangakas have offered their feminine point of view, especially on topics such as love, sex, pregnancy, and rape. Hence, girls and women could develop a deep empathy with their heroines. This is an important fact to highlight because before 1970s Japanese comics were written only by men, and due to the lack of a feminine point of view, female readers were not able to identify with their favourite characters.

In the 1980s, manga artists introduced new topics and genres, i.e. financial and social problems, sports, martial arts, historical series, detective stories, pornography, fantasy and horror (Bouissou, 2010: 28). In 1986, manga artist Ishinomori Shotarô was commissioned the creation of *Manga Nihon Keizai nyûmon*, a manga on Japanese economy, and in 1989 the artist, with other Japanese academics, was commissioned to create a history of Japan, called *Manga Nihon no rekishi* (Bouissou, 2010: 29). Since then, manga has become a medium of communication used by Japanese authorities, businesspersons, politicians and even the European Union delegation in Tokyo. In addition to the spread of Japanese comic books, Bouissou (2010: 28) specifies that after World War II a large number of products related to manga, like paperback volumes, TV and OVA series, animated and live action movies, music and musicals, videogames and merchandising products, have been sold, thus expanding the manga market globally. However, since the 1990s, the manga industry has had to face a crisis due to a change in the audience's interests. Furthermore, as manga started spreading online (through mobile phones and computers), the manga industry has had to deal with piracy.

To conclude, modern manga share many features with Japanese older forms of entertainment, and their style was heavily influenced by US comics, especially by

Disney's. Cohn (2010: 200) affirms that Japanese artists took from American authors of comics the use of multiple panels. Pre-war Japan mixed its wide culture of graphic narration with western art comics, thus giving birth to a product which developed during the early decades of the 20th century. After the defeat in World War II and the seven years of the American occupation, Japanese comics underwent a series of changes and became what nowadays is called manga. Japanese comics conventions begun to distance themselves from those of western comics, developing their famous and peculiar style (Zanettin, 2018). Nowadays Japanese comics culture is the largest in the world "with a production ten times greater than that of the rest of the world taken together" (Zanettin, 2018). The success of this product boomed globally thanks to sponsors like toys and the food industry, which used manga characters in advertising. Draper (2015: 7) underlines that the image of a cool Japan, a country where people eat sushi, libraries are big, people read manga, and where there are some of the leading animation studios in the world, coexists with a negative image of Japan which is linked to its past and wars. For these reasons, the purpose of the next sections is to investigate the impact of the Japanese culture on western countries, with special reference to anime and manga.

1.5 Anime and manga in the USA and the UK

Manga as Japanese comics aimed at Japanese readers gained consideration and popularity around the world, thus becoming a global media phenomenon (Johnson-Woods, 2010: 10). Even though the Japanese and American cultures are different and distant, anime sales have considerably grown in North America since 1963. It was in the 1990s, though, that the manga and anime market boomed globally. Hence, the purpose of this section is to investigate the reasons why Japanese products, especially manga and anime, caught the Western public's attention and some people prefer reading and watching Japanese comics and animation rather than western comics and TV series.

Western intelligentsia, educationalists and parents have long considered manga vulgar, violent and badly drawn comics (Bouissou, 2010: 17). Anime series were usually associated with violence and fringe culture because Americans thought that animation was only intended for children, and this misbelief explains why it was initially condemned (Chambers, 2012: 94). Similarly, in the United Kingdom people thought that Japanese animation dealt with depraved themes and topics, so it was considered inappropriate (Hernández-Pérez, 2016: 12-24). The aim to protect readers from those unsuitable

contents was pursued by censorship. Furthermore, in the West there was the misbelief that manga was just an ancillary product of anime. Many experts, among whom Bainbridge and Norris (2010: 237), argue that manga later achieved such a great success thanks to anime. In Australia it was anime that awakened people's interest in manga, and the same occurred in America (Bainbridge and Norris, 2010: 237). Chambers (2012: 94) maintains that people later started considering Japanese animation as more of a work of art than tasteless, violent animated series. It gained growing popularity, especially when Americans stopped thinking that it was just for children (Chambers, 2012: 96). Despite being condemned from the very first, in the United States, today, Japanese comics and animation are two huge markets. Therefore, analysing the role of anime in western countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom can be a useful key to uncover why both manga and anime have grown in popularity in the West.

As far as anime popularity in the United States is concerned, experts initially thought that Japanese animation would not become popular in the USA because of the cultural differences between the two countries, yet anime received a positive reception (Draper, 2015: 14). In spite of the many cultural differences, Draper (2015:12) affirms that the success of anime already started in 1963, when Osamu Tezuka's anime series *Tetsuwan Atomu* was broadcast under the name *Astro Boy*. Surprisingly, this show was not largely censored, even though it underwent a series of changes in order to make it more accessible to the American audience, e.g. the names of the characters were changed and some violent and questionable scenes were cut. In the 1990s, the most popular anime in the United States were *Pokémon, Sailor Moon* and *Dragon Ball Z* (Draper, 2015: 14). The contemporary popularity of anime in the United Stated reflects how globalization has affected America, though western animation had had an enormous significant impact upon Japanese animation already in the late 1910s (Draper, 2015: 11).

As regards manga, Rampant (2010: 222) affirms that in North America fans got first interested in anime and secondly turned their attention to manga, which was considered merchandise. Accordingly, Bainbridge and Norris (2010: 236) maintain that in the West manga was initially considered as one of the many adjuncts to anime and mention the anime movie *Akira* as an example. They say that fans were keen on following the story they saw in the anime and believed that manga was a way of supplementing their knowledge. On the contrary, in Japan, it was the manga which gave birth to the anime.

Therefore, in the United States manga was initially located in a merchandising flow. As a result, a new market — to be more precise, the manga market — developed in order to meet the fans' demand for more details about the stories depicted in their favourite anime movies or series. Bainbridge and Norris (2010: 237) offer another example by claiming that the bestselling manga in the United States, i.e. *Pokémon, Dragon Ball* and *Naruto,* were first distributed as anime and their manga became ancillary comic books sold with other merchandise products. This explains why many characters of the manga of *Shonen Magazine* and *Shonen Jump* like *Eightman, Kamen Rider, Devilman, Love Hina, Dragon Ball* and *Naruto* are known in the West thanks to their anime and not their manga.

The first manga which was translated for the American market was *Mai, the Psychic Girl* by Eclipse Comics in 1987 and Japanese comics became a mainstream hit in 2000 (Bainbridge and Norris, 2010: 235). Japanese comics began being imported and translated to satisfy a growing demand. Manga sales tripled from 2000 to 2003, reaching a market value of US$40-$50millon, and in 2010 they accounted for one third of the American graphic novel market. Nevertheless, these figures do not consider Original English-Language (OEL) manga and, more generally, the manga impact on Western popular culture.

Goldberg (2010: 281) believes that the initial failure of manga in the 1980s and early 1990s was due to the fact that publishers made a mistake defining manga as mostly intended for a narrow market: they thought that manga in general were aimed at teenage boys. This mistake reduced the possibility for the diversity of manga genres to emerge. It was the multitude of manga genres that confused American publishers. Japanese comics did not fit the superheroes' universe depicted in US comics and, consequently, publishers had problems in identifying a possible audience of manga readers (Goldberg, 2010: 282). An outstanding example is Nakazawa Keiji's *Hadeshi no Gen,* which goes beyond children's stories because it deals with serious topics; in particular, this manga tells the story about life in Hiroshima after the atomic bomb. So, American publishers came into contact with a serious comic for the first time, because normally American comics did not cover such topics. However, the publication of *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, a comic which dealt with the Holocaust, gave more credibility to the fact that comics can be considered literature. Before selling Japanese comics, publishers were interested in investigating the sales of other comics which shared some characteristics with manga in

order to see whether the audience would buy this new foreign product or not (Goldberg, 2010: 283). *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* by Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird was a black and white comic, which became a bestseller. So, publishers found that an active readership could appreciate non-coloured comics. In addition, publishers used to select manga written by famous authors such as the famous anime director and cofounder of Studio Ghibli, Miyazaki Hayao.

Since the English translation of the one-shot analysed in Chapter three was released both in Europe and in North America, it is worth to investigate comics distribution in the USA. Goldberg (2010: 282) affirms that readers went to the comic book stores, ordered the titles they wanted and the big comic companies, for example DC and Marvel, consequently printed enough to fulfil the demand. Even though this model was successful for both readers and comics companies, it did not widen comics book readership. One of the first distributed manga was science-fiction epic *Kaze no Tani no Naushika* by Hayao. It was published in the United States in monthly instalments from 1988 to 1996 by VIZ Communications (later VIZ Media). Then, thanks to VIZ Communications' publication of the *shōjo* manga *Bishôjo Senshi Sailor Moon* (*Sailor Moon*) by Takeuchi Naoko's, the number of readers increased as female readers in the market started reading manga. In 2003 VIZ Media introduced in America a version of the Japanese manga magazine *Shōnen Jump* of Shueisha, one of the leading Japanese manga publishers (Goldberg, 2010: 286). In 2005, with the publication of the manga magazine called *Shōjo Beat*, VIZ Media tried to appeal to girls, because *Shōnen Jump* readers were generally boys. VIZ Media has constantly grown thanks to the sales of manga anthologies, marketing tie-ins to card and video games, and exclusive access to popular Japanese titles. Matsui (2009: 3) states that VIZ Media adapted manga to catch the American audience's attention through marketing efforts, called localization; as a result, the American manga readership increased gradually. Accordingly, Goldberg (2010: 284) specifies that thanks to VIZ Media manga market has grown considerably in North America. In 2006 the company's manga *Naruto* and *Fruits Basket* entered the USA *Today's Booklist.* Beside VIZ Media, other big manga distributors in America are Dark Horse and Tokyopop. Initially the manga publishing house Dark Horse published its products imitating American comic book publishers, i.e. by releasing titles monthly, flipping the reading orientation, adding colour to the pages, and choosing manga whose subjects might appeal

to teenage boys. Manabe Johji's *Outlanders*, published from 1988 to 1992, was one of Dark Horse's first titles. Dark Horse has eventually begun to abandon the traditional American comic book model for manga by releasing its catalogue following the conventional Japanese manga format because its readers have developed a major interest in the plots than in the format (Goldberg, 2010: 285). However, Matsui (2009: 4) claims that this innovation of keeping the conventional manga format and offering American readers the opportunity to embrace Japanese culture was introduced for the first time by the leading powerhouses of manga publishing in America,

Tokyopop. In 2002, the standardization strategy proposed by this publishing house was made possible thanks to previous VIZ Media's localization efforts (Matsui, 2009: 4). Tokyopop is one of the major manga sellers, founded in 1996 by Stuart Levy and initially called Mixx Entertainment. Its most famous publication was *Sailor Moon* in the magazine *MixxZine*. Tokyopop aimed to appeal to non-traditional readers of comic books and manga, opting for the growing *shōjo* fandom, without flipping and adapting the reading orientation, teaching the audience how to be *otaku* by explaining how to read correctly the sequence of text and image and including plot summaries, character descriptions, and glossaries of Japanese terms and culture (Goldberg, 2010: 287).

Another manga publishing company is Vertical, which was founded in 2001 in New York. This company initially published contemporary Japanese genre and popular fiction and nonfiction, marketing its products as literature intended for a literary-minded audience interested in serious topics (Goldberg, 2010: 287). To be more precise, it focused on classic manga titles, e.g. the publication of Osamu Tezuka's eight-volume *Buddha* series was their first project. Since its public was mostly made up by an adult readership, Vertical decided to flip the reading orientation of its manga. However, the publishing house eventually decided not to flip its titles such as Tezuka's *Dororo*, which could appeal to a younger audience.

Finally, other smaller publishers, who decided not to compete with the big publishing houses, entered the manga market by publishing other genres, like *yaoi* and *josei*, to appeal to a niche audience. Aurora publishing house, which was founded in 1996, expanded its market selling titles to attract older female readers, e.g. in 2007 it published Tamaki Chihiro's *josei* title *Walkin' Butterfly*.

In the 1990s, with the expansion of the Internet, fans began importing the manga genres they wanted to read, but which were not published in the United States. Already in the late 1980s fans who watched anime or read manga were disappointed by the Americanization of these products; consequently, they started to translate Japanese products which were not sold in the United States by themselves (Chambers, 2012: 97). However, these practices of translating and distributing manga and anime were carried out illegally. Furthermore, "fansubbing" helped to create such a huge market by providing free target-language versions of anime, which are generally quite expensive. 'Fansubbing' groups sprang up all over the United States, especially in college campuses, in high schools and extracurricular clubs. Therefore, the number of both 'scanlated' manga – i.e. manga scanned and translated by fans – and fun-subbed anime rose considerably, a phenomenon defined by Rampant (2010: 222) as a kind of New Age samizdat.

As far as the spreading of anime in the United Kingdom is concerned, Hernández-Pérez *et al*. (2016: 1) point out that there are few sources which report on anime history in this country. The UK has been slower and reluctant in importing Japanese television products, if compared with other European countries, — especially France, Italy and Spain — where the anime industry expanded considerably in the years 1975-1995. They (2016: 3) state that according to an article by *The Guardian* anime were considered invisible in the British Television schedule, even though the most popular and international franchises, i.e. *Pokémon, Bakugan* and *Yu-Gi-Oh!,* have been broadcast. For British TV companies, buying series, movies and animation products already in English was cheaper than buying products in other languages because there were no dubbing costs to bear; hence, importing American movies, cartoons and series became a common trend (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 27). Maybe anime distribution has never experienced the same growth as in the United States because of its high price, and this may be the reason why in the UK the piracy rates are high. In the UK activities and events related to Japanese pop culture take place, for example, during video game and comic conventions, like the London Super Comic Con, though they are not as popular as in other countries. Probably it is because of the preconception within the British media that only few people are interested in modern Japanese culture (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 27).

Hernández-Pérez *et al*. (2016: 8) divide the spread of anime in the United Kingdom into four periods. In the first period 1963-1989 *shōnen* genre anime were difficult to find in TV programming schedules in the UK, yet exceptionally BBC1 broadcast *Battle of the Planets*. Surprisingly, in the same years American cartoons were widespread in Europe and Japanese anime began being broadcast in the United States. Furthermore, the importation of anime, like other forms of globally produced animation, had to compete with British children's television productions. In the UK, animated movies or cartoons which were inspired by children's literature were considered good substitutes of American action and comedy cartoons, so two Japanese anime versions of *The Moomis* were released: the first was *Mūmin* by ITV*,* the second *Tanoshii Mūmin Ikka by* BBC. As to the anime movies which were released at the cinema, *Panda & the Magic Serpent* (Golden Era, 1961) and *Alakazam the Great* (Anglo Amalgamated, 1961) were also broadcast in the UK, although anime releases were scarce in this period. The lack of anime cannot be exclusively attributed to prejudices, even if the social and institutional reception of anime was not particularly good (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 9). It was the second period that marked the entry of anime in the UK (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 10). In the 1990s, the leading VHS distributor Manga Ltd Entertainment released both titles for adults and for a 12-15-year-old audience as its American counterparts did (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 10). The third period went from 2000 to 2008 and saw attempts to increase the offering of the programmes through cable and satellite technologies. Anime Central, which operated from 2007 to 2009, was an example of these initiatives. Its catalogue was limited and among its titles the following are the most remarkable: *Cowboy Bebop* (1998), *Full Metal Alchemist* (2003), *Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex* (2002) and *Bleach* (2004) (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 15). During this third period, the distribution of anime sales reached its peak in the United Kingdom. In these years the presence of Studio Ghibli in the cinema market is the most interesting event, because six out of nine Japanese animated movies distributed in the UK were produced by this studio. In addition, many of Ghibli's classic film of the 1980s and the 1990s were broadcast for the first time in the United Kingdom. Various films exhibitions, and events associated with Japanese visual culture took place, thanks to institutions such as the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), which hosted some of the events. However, the offer of anime in the television catalogue has dramatically been reduced since 2009. For

this reason, Hernández-Pérez *et al.* (2016: 15) set 2009 as the year in which the fourth period begins. In the UK this fourth ongoing period is marked by Netflix and other streaming services which are widening the number of people who watch anime (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 20). In the UK the anime catalogue of Netflix is smaller than that of other countries such as, Japan, US, Canada, and France; however, there are other streaming services like Crunchyroll which provide a richer catalogue. Despite the spread of streaming services, piracy rates in the United Kingdom are still high; therefore, the government and industries are taking actions to reduce it. The measures applied by the government include the banning of sites where illegal downloads are possible and letters to households downloading contents illegally. According to Hernández-Pérez *et al*. (2016: 25), Japanese products were misinterpreted. However, in the 1980s Japanese products spread globally, and western countries began looking differently at Japan, so in the UK the social reaction to anime and manga began to change. Nowadays, in the UK cartoons are mostly aimed at children and can be easily replaced with educational contents (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 30).

According to the figures of manga sales in the UK provided by Hayley (2010: 267), from 2004 to 2005 the sales of graphic novels and manga showed an increase from approximately 290,000 to 577,000 copies. In the same period the sales of manga publishers boomed, e.g. the sales of *Tokyopop* increased by 18 percent. The manga boom in the United Kingdom is the result of the influence of the anime market, free amateur translation, and the intensification of the visual culture (Hayley, 2010: 268). Even though there is still a conservative approach towards manga, the attitudes are changing (Hayley, 2010: 279). Initially, in the British manga readership was too small, therefore, publishers preferred not to enter manga market (Malone, 2010: 326). For this reason, in the country manga were supplied by import from America at exorbitant prices. However, manga sales grew from 2003 and 2005, so the British publisher Gollancz launched the Gollancz Manga imprint and released Takahashi Kazuki's *Yu-Gi-Oh!*. In the same year, Random House established the Tanoshimi line to release manga issued in the US by Del Rey (Malone, 2010: 327). The 2005 marked a turning point in the way in which British publishers considered manga, thanks to the publishing house SelfMedeHero which launched a new concept, called *Manga Shakespeare*, which was later published in 2007. In 2007, Titan Books licensed several titles from Dark Horse. Little Brown Book released

manga from the new American publisher Yen Press. Hayley (2010: 267) states that she and her collaborators invented this concept through the fusion of manga visuals with Shakespearean texts. The aim of *Manga Shakespeare* was to introduce Shakespeare's work especially to teenagers in a visual way. They flipped the manga format, i.e. they kept Western reading orientation, in order to address an audience who usually reads from left to right (Hayley, 2010: 269). Hayley (2010: 271) reveals that they changed the setting of the stories, e.g. their *Romeo and Juliet* is set in Japan, while their *Hamlet* is set in a cyberpunk future surrounded by cutting-age technologies. The publication of Original English Language manga shows the influence of Japanese comics on the culture of English-speaking countries (Bainbridge and Norris, 2010: 249).

From a cultural point of view, certain Japanese cultural practices and traditions do not translate in other Western cultures. Therefore, in translated manga and anime many references are lost, and some themes are not kept because they are not accepted or understood by the audience of the target culture (Chambers, 2012: 94). Chambers (2012: 99) claims that culture-related items like food have been generally modified in the American adaptation of many anime series because the studios feared that American children would not recognize certain items as they are not familiar with some elements of the Japanese culture. In many anime series some scenes were cut and censored by the Action for Children's Television because of their violent content, or because they displayed homoeroticism, gender ambiguity and their protagonists were not always showed in a positive light (Draper, 2015: 13). They are often depicted with serious flaws, which make them seem more human and realistic. As to the topics developed in anime and manga, which catch Americans' attention, Draper (2015: 8) states that family, death and friendship are the most appreciated themes. Death is acknowledged to be part of life by Japanese people, and this is the reason why it is acceptable to show it also in anime aimed at children (Draper 2015: 13). In addition, Americans enjoy anime where characters are depicted with huge expressive eyes and fight against devious villains.

Bainbridge and Norris (2010: 240) argue that manga's representations of human bodies, objects, and basic dramatic or comic situations are transparent, therefore, Japanese comics can be universally understood. Bainbridge and Norris underline that the transparency given by the visual layout makes manga legible in terms of literacy, emotional investment, and enjoyment. Some experts think that mangakas emphasise

universally understood visuals and soften Japanese presence. Yet, other experts believe that denationalization is just a strategy to ensure manga global success. In this respect, Bainbridge and Norris (2010: 246) affirm that an important characteristic of the export strategy adopted by Japanese cultural industries is the denationalization of content. Characters' depictions mix various cultural, racial, ethnical and gender features, which, as a result, make them racially, culturally, ethnically, and sometimes even sexually indeterminate. However, many manga artists prefer western canons, so many characters appear as non-Japanese, e.g. heroes and heroines have long blond hair, as in *Naruto* and *Sailor Moon*, and large eyes as in *Pokémon*.

To conclude, Japan promotes itself through its culture in international relations, thus highlighting the country's potential to be a global soft power, in order to increase the number of domestic and international tourists (Draper, 2015: 3). The Japanese cultural industry has always had success exporting its products, in particular, through an export strategy which includes globalization, indigenization and denationalization of contents (Bainbridge and Norris, 2010: 242). In spite of the considerable growth which manga market has experienced, Draper (2015: 10) maintains that manga sales in Japan have dropped, but in the United States the manga market makes hundreds of millions of dollars a year. Nevertheless, the high sales of merchandising such as clothes and toys indicate how anime influences economically the North American market and wields soft power over it (Chambers, 2012: 100). Anime culture, *otaku* — i.e. people who developed an anime fanbase and are obsessed by products such as manga, anime, and videogames (Draper, 2015: 20) —, Japanese comics and animated videos have become more acceptable, spurring more research and causing more libraries to stock Japanese products (Chambers, 2012: 98). In this respect, Matsui (2009 :3) claims that thanks to the success of manga, now learning Japanese in the United States is about cool pop culture, whereas before it was considered a smart choice for business-minded college students. English-speaking fans have been willing to promote the accessibility to anime and manga culture also in other countries, even though, being amateurs, fans generally receive little to no payment for the products they make (Chambers, 2012: 98). The practices of subtitling anime series, translating Japanese comics and then distributing them have radically changed the global media landscape. Bouissou *et al*. (2010: 256) affirm that initially in the United States the fans stimulated the growth of the manga market, thanks to

underground imports and homemade copies and were subsequently bought and edited by professional publishers. Hence, the consolidation of groups may generate a voice which draws the attention of producers and distributors, thus persuading them that there are readers interested in specific products (Hernández-Pérez *et al*., 2016: 20). The illegal movements of amateur translators and distributors have promoted the importation of new cultural products, creating a new rising market worldwide.

1.6 Anime and manga in Italy

According to the investigations of Bouissou *et al.* (2010: 254), in 2005 the sales figures for manga reached 42 percent in Asia — excluding Japan — 36 percent in the United States and 22 percent in the rest of the world. Studying figures about manga impact in Europe is interesting because each European country shows a different attitude towards Japanese cultural products, e.g. in Germany 80 percent of manga readers are women, whose favourite genre is *shōjo,* whereas in Switzerland the figures for male and female manga readers are balanced, reaching 50 percent (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 256). Having analysed the figures for manga sales in the European market, Bouissou *et al*. (2010: 254) maintain that in 2005 Italy was the leading country for the number of manga sales, followed by France. Wong (2010: 345) claims that Italy has been influenced by the spread of Japanese comics and counts seven major Italian-language manga distributors. Even so, in a few years, figures have changed and nowadays France is the leading country of the European manga market (Bouissou *et al.,* 2010: 255). Manga readers are usually teenagers, but the fandom extends to sophisticated adult readership, thus widening the number of readers (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 256). Nowadays the European manga fandom comprises people who are in their thirties (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 254). However, the aim of this section is to analyse briefly the role of anime and manga in Italy, because the relay translation which will be analysed in Chapter three is from English into Italian.

Drawing on a survey conducted in 2006-2007, Bouissou *et al*. (2010: 254) specify that in Italy the percentage of male manga readers (57 percent) is higher than that of female readers. Nevertheless, girls and women constitute a more dynamic fandom because they participate actively to the events related to anime and manga. The average age of Italian readers and their main occupation are other relevant data about Italian readers uncovered by their survey, which shows that in 2006 Italian manga readers were

averagely aged 22 and 42 percent of them were university students. They argue that the average age of Italian manga readers was higher as compared to that of readers from other European countries. Italian readers were probably influenced by the distribution of anime as happened in the United States (Bouissou *et al.,* 2010: 258).

In Italy, the all-time-bestselling manga were *Dragon Ball*, followed by *Inu Yasha* and, lastly, by *One Piece* (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 254). As to the reasons why European, and also Italian, fans enjoy Japanese products so much, Bouissou *et al*. (2010: 261) provide a more intimate and private explanation by claiming that people like reading manga and watching anime because it is a form of escapism. These forms of art reflect the fans' problems and experience (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 260); readers easily identify with their favourite characters, who have characteristics which their fans would like to have, and the plots encourage the refection on social problems. Japanese comics and animation series caught the audience' attention because their plots deal with ordinary life, including common problems and familiar, even though ordinary elements are normally mixed with fantastic features (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 261). In addition, for the European readership manga are more attractive than western comics because they comprise multiple genres which please a wide audience. Furthermore, reading manga is also a form of social interaction, especially in Italy and in France. The social interaction of the fandom increased through social practices such as talking about manga with reading buddies, sharing books, introducing this form of art to friends and family members, and taking part to manga conventions (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 261). Reading manga has positive effects on readers because it helps them improve their states of mind, not only because they share their free time and connect with other people, but also because fans feel less stressed, more dynamic, more comfortable with themselves and learn new values.

As regards anime, Pellittieri (1999: 251) claims that before the arrival of Japanese animated series, in the 1960s, in Italy some films from Hong Kong, China and Japan and some Japanese animated movies were broadcast, e.g. *Saityki (La tredici fatiche di Ercolino), Anju to Zushiomaru (Robin e i due moschettieri e mezzo), Andersen Monogatari (Le meravigliose favole di Andersen), Nagagutsu o haita neko (Il gatto con gli stivali)*. These animated movies were aimed at children and dealt with traditional Oriental culture and themes or modified European tales. From 1975 Italian television underwent a series of changes: the Italian state-owned network Rai introduced in its

television schedule "*fascia oraria delle 19"*, i.e. the programmes which were broadcast from 7 pm, American tv series and cartoons which were released daily (Pellittieri, 1999: 252). Then, in 1976, a new legislation came into effect and consequently the number of private and local networks rose considerably. These networks wanted to fill their schedule with cheap programmes, so both Hanna & Barbera's products and anime offered a good solution. Between 1975 and 1976, in Italy two Japanese animated series were released, i.e. *Vicky il vichingo* and *Heidi*, which obtained great success. Malone (2010: 316) specifies that *Heidi* was one of the first anime to be introduced in the Italian television in 1975, and its success led to the introduction of other anime based on western literature, e.g. *The Dog of Flanders* (1975*), Anne of Green Gables* (1979), and *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1981). However, he points out that the arrival of Nagai *Gō's Majingaa Zetto*, which was retitled in Italy *Atlas UFO Robot* — better known as *Goldrake* — led to a wave of Nagai's robot series. In addition to these series aimed at boys, anime for girls like Mizuki Kyōko and Igarashi Yumiko's *shōjo* soap opera *Kyandii Kyandii* (*Candy Candy*) were broadcast. Most anime series appeared on Rai 2, a state-owned network; however, Italy was the first European country to allow private broadcasting companies to release anime series on television (Malone, 2010: 317). The Italian leading holding company which broadcast Japanese animated series was Fininvest (Pellittieri, 1999: 257). To the reasons for the great anime success, Pellittieri (1999:253) adds their low price and, the fact that they were ready-made products — even though they underwent an adaptation process — and that they were extremely innovative and spectacular shows. In Italy the number of anime series which were broadcast boomed between 1978 and 1983 and the number of anime released in Italy from 1976 to 1990 hit 350 shows (Malone, 2010: 317; Pellittieri, 1999: 257).

Malone (2010:317) maintains that thanks to this success many European artists begun writing licensed spin-off comics or manga equivalents, such as the Italian *Goldrake* comic issued by Edizioni Flash in 1978, or comics depicting stories about *Captain Harlock* as well as *Capitan Futuro, Gundam, Daitarn 3, Gaiking* and *Grand Prix* published in the magazine *Noi Supereroi* by Edizioni TV's 1981. In the early 1990s, Japanese comics begun being translated, especially after the arrival in Europe of Ōtomo Katsuhiro's *Akira*, whose editions, including its Italian edition, were licensed from the 1989 American Marvel/Epic edition (Malone, 2010: 319). Despite the creation of spin-

off comics, in Italy the first published manga were heavily censored and their reading orientation was flipped and colourized (Malone, 2010: 318). Nagai Gō and Ota Gosaku's original *Gureeto Majingaa,* which was released with the title *Il grande Mazinga/Mazinger* in 1979, Mizuki and Igarashi's *Candy Candy*, Ikeda Riyoko's *Berusaiyu no Bara* known as *Rose of Versailles*, or *Lady Oscar* are some manga titles which were distributed by Fabbri Editori and were subject to the strict Italian censorship.

Initially, adaptation was the translation strategy which was increasingly adopted when translating anime. Pellittieri (1999: 266) maintains that Italian broadcasting companies did not usually buy anime series from Japan, preferring other versions which were released in other countries. However, the use of anime versions made by other countries as a source text for the Italian version often led to confusion and the original author's intent was not respected (Pellittieri, 1999: 267). In the Japanese animated series of *Mazinga Z* and *Grande Mazinga* the names of some characters were changed, causing some confusion in the public (Pellittieri, 1999: 266). The protagonist of *Mazinga Z* is Kabuto Koji, in *Grande Mazinga* the main character is Tsurugi Tetsuya, and Kon is the coprotagonist in *Atlas Ufo Robot*. In the Italian Rai version Kon was called Rio *in Mazinga Z*, but the character kept his original name in the version broadcast by Finninvest. Kon was called Alcor in *Atlas Ufo Robot*, even though he is the same character as in the three series of *Mazinga*.

Pellittieri (1999: 268) provides a summary of four Italian adaptation strategies which were carried out especially by Mediaset adaptors: the first strategy concerned the change of the Japanese names into Italian or European ones and the elimination of all the Japanese texts which appeared on the screen; the second was the substitution of Japanese songs with Italian ones, the third was the elimination of violent or sexual scenes; the fourth was the adaptation of original Japanese dialogues, which led to a loss on both a linguistic and narrative level. Sometimes the changes due to these adaptation strategies could be positive because it is easier for an Italian child to remember an Italian song rather than a Japanese one, especially if it rhymes (Pelittieri, 1999: 272). Similarly, some Japanese names may be difficult to remember or to write, therefore, using Italian ones may be a good marketing strategy; even though Japanese names are usually not so difficult to pronounce and remember. However, these strategies may have negative effects, especially when they affect the understanding of the storyline and the author's

intent is not respected. Pelittieri (1999: 273) claims that it is not appropriate to adopt solely cultural adaptation strategies when translating anime, because children should be aware that many different cultures exist. Thus, characters can have names which differ from the ones they are used to. Furthermore, thanks to anime and manga children could possibly develop their curiosity and be willing to explore the world if they are exposed to other cultures in their childhood.

As regards Italian manga distributors, Malone (2010: 321) states that in 1989 Granata Press was founded by Luigi Bernardi, who in 1990 launched the uncoloured magazine *Zero*. This magazine contained Hara Tetsuo and Buronson's *Hokuto no Ken* (*Fist of the North Star*, retitled *Ken il guerriero*) and Kanzaki Masaomi's *Xenon* which were taken from American versions by VIZ Communications. The following year Granata Press released a magazine titled *Mangazine*, where Takahashi Rumiko's *Urusei Yatsura* (retitled *Lamù*), Shirato Sanpei's *Kamui Den* (*Legend of Kamui*, retitled *Kamui*) and Takahashi's *Ranma ½* were published. In 1992 the publishing house Granata Press issued albums of manga, including among its best-selling titles Kurumada Masami's *Seitoushi Seiya* (*Saint Seiya*; retitled *Cavalieri dello Zodiaco*) and Manabe Jōji's *Autorandaazu* (*Outlanders*). In 1991, Play Press tried to introduce several Japanese comics series dealing with adult themes, e.g. Terasawa Buichi's *Gokuu* (*Midnight Eye Goku*) and *Kobura* (*Space Adventure Cobra*), yet these series were not successful; therefore, Play Press decided to enter the erotic manga market by introducing in Italy Inui Haruka's *Ogenki Kurinikku* (*Ogenki Clinic*, retitled *La clinica dell'amore*). Star Comics launched a rival magazine, *Kappa*, containing Fujishima Kosuke's *Aa Megamisama* (*Oh My Goddess!* retitled as *Oh mia Dea*!) and Shirow Masamune's *Koukaku Kidoutai* (*Ghost in the Shell*, retitled *Squadra speciale Ghost*). Hence, due to growing competition, in 1993 Granata Press increased its supply with the acquisition of Nagai Go's *Debiruman* (*Devilman*), new editions of its classics *Mazing Z* and *Il grande Mazing*, *Lady Oscar* (now uncensored) *Capitan Harlock*, and finally, through the publication of Mizayaki Hayao's *Nausicaä* in album form. In 1995, Star Comics printed from right to left Toriyama Akira's *Dragon Ball*, and this courageous decision was rewarded with record sales (Malone, 2010: 322). In the same year the publishing house launched a *shōjo* magazine, *Amici*, licensed Takeuchi Naoko's *Bishoujo Senshi Seeraa Muun* (*Sailor Moon*), and started printing paperbacks similar to Japanese *tankōbon*. Furthermore, US-owned Marvel Italia

entered the Italian manga market with Asamiya Kia's *Sairento Mebiusu* (*Silent Möbius*), *Seijuu Denshou Daaku Enjeru* (*Dark Angel*), and Inoue Takehiko's *Suramu Danku* (*Slam Dunk*) which was Italy's first sports manga title. In 2010, Italian manga publishing houses were Dinyt, D/Visual, and Shin Vision which publish only manga; Star Comics, Flashbook, Hazard publish also other types of comics, yet mainly manga; and Coconino Press, Panini, Kappa, and Play Press which publish mainly other types of comics, but also manga (Bouissou *et al*., 2010: 255). Some manga are also published by Einaudi, Mondadori, or Rizzoli, although those publishers normally deal with other products. Nowadays the leading manga publishing houses in Italy are Star Comics and Panini/Planet Manga (Malone, 2010: 322).

As far as the reception of Japanese products in Italy is concerned, Pellittieri (1999: 253) underlines how anime like *Goldrake* marked a turning point in the transition towards a more modern concept of cartoon. In this respect, he affirms that thanks to *Goldrake*, toys, magazines, graphic novels and other anime series began being increasingly imported from Japan. This success led to an increase in the sales of manga by-products, which comprise books, anime comics – which are Italian products featuring images taken from anime –, pictures, and CDs with the soundtracks which marked people's childhood (Pellittieri, 1999: 261). Despite the boom in the figures of anime sales and merchandising, many Italian critics disapprove of anime, thus increasing prejudices towards Japanese products (Pellittieri, 1999: 254). Over-protective parents and many politicians complained about the violence in anime, saying that they were non-educational, inappropriate TV shows, so the country saw the rise of two opposite points of view. On the one hand, those who were against anime and manga, supporting American products; on the other hand, those who accepted Japanese products. The debate lasted almost up to the 1990s.

With regard to the strict Italian censorship, in his speech at *Cyberfreedom* in 2005 in Pescara D'Agostino explained that in anime many scenes were simply cut and even openings were cut or adapted in Italian. However, when the censored works were released, many cuts and changes led to some incongruences and non-sense, causing the public to make a huge effort to understand the scene, or, even the storyline. For example, D'Agostino (2005) maintains that Fabbri Editori censored the context of *Il grande Mazinga*, by manipulating its plot. In addition, homosexual relationships were not

accepted, so in the Italian version of the anime *Sailor Moon* a female character was changed and became a male character. Accordingly, Parini (2012: 329) specifies that in the Italian dubbed versions homosexual relationships are turned into friendships. In Italy the misbelief that cartoons are targeted exclusively at children is remarkably widespread, and many anime series were subject to censorship (Parini, 2012: 325). Anime series are usually broadcast during a protected time slot, i.e. the afternoon slot, when children usually watch their favourite programmes; therefore, the TV series or cartoons broadcast during this slot cannot show violence or nudity. Surprisingly, it is quite common that the same anime, which were censored when broadcast on TV, are not altered for the DVD market (Parini, 2012: 327). This explains why uncut versions are commonly released on DVD. Censorship takes place both on visual and verbal levels. However, sometimes alterations are difficult to make, especially when editors have to change the visual label (Parini, 2012: 330). In Italy scenes of nudity tend to be simply removed, while violent scenes can be cut, removed or airbrushed, e.g. blood and weapons sometimes are painted out or airbrushed (Parini, 2012: 328). Parini maintains that cutting scenes is naturally the cheapest solution. On the verbal level, she affirms that in dubbing the plot can be changed through the modification of the dialogues, e.g. the age of the characters can be changed, making them older, so they are more suitable for the situation in which they are depicted. Japanese texts once used to be eliminated, whereas today Italian distributors tend to keep the original (Parini, 2012: 330). This occurred with the names of meals and names of characters and titles of the anime series are often adapted using American or Italian names to make them easier to pronounce and remember. It is worth highlighting a difference in the Italian and American censorship: American editing tends to domesticate cultural references such as food and to delete any Japanese writing or inserts in order to replace them with English text (Parini, 2012: 329). Long moments of silence in the Italian adaptation are filled with voiceover adding pieces of information (Parini, 2012: 331) which often spoil what will happen later. Another strategy commonly used in Italian dubbing is the use of synonyms to flatten language, e.g. in Italian euphemisms such as *eliminare* or *mandare all'altro mondo* are quite common expressions related to the semantic field of killing (Parini, 2012: 333). However, as fans are against the manipulation of anime, they create many associations to fight against censorship and spend their free time watching anime on tv to find differences, manipulations, and scenes

which have been censored. One outstanding example is ADAM Italia (*Associazione Difesa Anime & Manga Italia*), that is an Italian association whose purpose is to fight, mainly through the Internet, against the manipulations which Japanese animation undergoes due to the Italian strict censorship. Even though many otakus complain about censorship because editors and distributors manipulate the work, sometimes alterations may be useful, e.g. Japanese names and titles are sometimes difficult to pronounce and, consequently, to remember, so changing them could be a marketing strategy. However, it is not correct to dramatically manipulate a storyline, making the plot difficult to follow. Nowadays the Italian censorship is not as strict as it was in the past and the situation is changing slowly and gradually (D'Agostino, 2005; Parini, 2012: 333).

Finally, thanks to Japan's effective marketing strategy, Japanese cultural products have slowly caught Western public's attention, especially in the USA. As a result, the negative stereotypes of manga and anime as violent, pornographic and vulgar products have weakened. People have begun dispelling the misbelief that all animated series are intended for children and the number of translated manga and anime has considerably grown globally. Since the 1990s through the Internet many fans have spread their translations of manga and anime, which initially were not distributed in their country or were largely censored. On the one hand, this illegal practice sometimes has positive effects on publications because publishers buy the titles which fans are interested in, give credits to the Japanese author, and pay professional translators who make high quality translations. On the other hand, it has significantly increased piracy worldwide, because many fans who do not know Japanese often translate manga from other fans' English translations into their own language. Therefore, many translated manga are available on the Internet for free and many manga readers tend not to buy manga, and ultimately do not support the authors and publishers' work. For these reasons, the following chapter aims to study how to translate comics, provide the definition of relay translation and investigate crowdsourcing.

1.7 *Death Note*

Each western comics culture has its own history and its narrative and drawing styles, formats, and genres may differ considerably. Britain and France have a tradition of graphic narrative which goes back to caricature magazines, e.g. the French *La Caricature*

(1830‑1835) and the British *Punch Magazine* (1845-1992) (Zanettin, 2018). Cultural recognition of comics varies from country to country, e.g. in the UK comics have largely been perceived as only a type of children's literature (Zanettin, 2018). However, a common heritage of visual codes developed, and Japanese comics reshaped comics cultures all over the world, changing western societies' reactions to manga.

Death note is a bestselling Japanese comic published between 2003 and 2006. It comprises 12 volumes and two special one-shots were added to the original series. It is intended for young adults and its American translation is aimed at teenagers who are 16 years old or older because it contains fantasy violence (Curran, 2015). The yellow label on the cover of the Italian translation specifies that it is not intended for children. It tells the story of a Japanese god of death Ryuk who throws a death note into the human world that is found by a clever student, called Light Yagami. When he discovers that it is a weapon, he decides to kill criminals, adopting the nickname Kira. It comes from the morphing of the English word ‘killer’, and it was initially used by Japanese people to write about the killer of criminals. The Japanese police and the most famous detective L try to catch him, and the comic covers the clever investigation. The chapter analysed in this thesis is the new one-shot released by Shueisha in February 2020. It is set in 2019 in Japan and Light Yagami has been defeated. A couple of years after the death note was sent again to the human world by the shinigami Midra. However, the new Kira committed suicide after using it, so Midra gave the death note back to Ryuk. In the 2017 the shinigami Ryuk brought it back into the human world and threw it against the head of a young student called Minoru Tanaka. Ruyk proposed Minoru an exchange: the weapon for apples. The boy did not want to use the murdering notebook, but he feared that someone else could have used it, so he accepted and came up with a brilliant plan, which would be put into action two years later.

A specificity of this manga is the extensive use of the English language, which gives a hybrid linguistic identity to it (Curran, 2015). The rules of the weapon are written in English and the main protagonist has to translate them into Japanese. The constant contact between Japanese and English reflects the linguistic diversity existing in Japan, e.g. the web shows this current linguistic engagement (Curran, 2015). In the official English translation, the script has been adjusted to be read from left to right instead of vertically, and to acquire some Japanese vocabulary, e.g. the Japanese term *shinigami* is

frequently used throughout the English version (Curran, 2015). For these reasons, this comic is worth studying from a linguistic point of view. Eventually, the analysis of the Italian crowdsourced translation of the English version of the special one-shot is interesting because comics translation and crowdsourcing can be investigated.

Chapter two

Comics translation, relay translation and crowdsourcing

2.1 Comics translation

This chapter investigates comics translation, that is, how professional translators carry it out, and identifies some differences in translations offered by fans. Furthermore, this chapter aims to provide a definition of relay, indirect, and support translation. Finally, it analyses crowdsourcing, i.e., a recent ongoing online phenomenon related to translation.

2.1.1 The process of translating a comic

The process of the publication of a translated comic involves securing reproduction rights, so the foreign publishing company buys the original files from the original publisher and then adapts it — or charges the adaptation to an external agency — for local readership (Zanettin, 2009: 38). Translators are then given a copy of the comic and produce a text which they carefully subdivide into pages and numbered paragraphs, which match the balloons and captions of the source text, and translate it. As far as the translation process of comics is concerned, translators — like readers — approach comics as a sequence of visual messages (Celotti, 2014: 37). The front cover and flyleaf are the first visual messages which translators see and after looking carefully at the comic book, they glance at the first pages. This quick reading helps the translator to identify the rhythm of the comic book by the order of panels and layout of the page. When the translation is done, it then goes back to the publisher, who orders the revision, and, eventually, a letterer erases the source text from balloons and captions to replace it with the translated text (Zanettin, 2009: 39). Necessary changes to pictures and editing process of the final product are carried out by the art director and graphic editors. In the past the letterers' and graphic editors' job was manual, more complex, and extremely expensive, so changes to the pictures were not made if unnecessary. This is the reason why changes were made only if dictated by institutional or self-censorship. By contrast, nowadays graphic editors' and letterers' tasks are easier than in the past thanks to cutting-age technology and computers, i.e. today the lettering is done through graphics programmes (Zanettin, 2014: 21).

Translating a comic is a challenging task: translators have to deal with cultural issues and the close relationship between visual and verbal components because they collaborate in the creation of meaning (Celotti, 2014: 35). In Translation Studies the term "constrained translation" has been coined to refer to the translation of multimedia texts (Celotti, 2014: 34). In particular, the text in comics is written in balloons, which is seen as a limitation to the translator's freedom. However, balloons are not only a constraint for translators, but also pictures can become a limitation as they are universally understood and may constitute a comprehensive visual language. Hence, bearing in mind the picture is fundamental because the visual element helps to grasp the whole of the meaning, in fact translating a comic involves both the analysis of its linguistic and graphic side (Rota, 2014: 84). Furthermore, translators should pay attention to every visual sign, or the message could be misinterpreted (Celotti, 2014: 34). A misreading of the visual elements may lead to a substantial alteration in translation (Celotti, 2014: 38). Therefore, the translators' goal is to keep the correspondence between pictures and words. In the Italian translation of Schulz's comic strip (see Figure 2.1) "Joe Rock!" is rendered with *fondale basso* (literally 'low seabed') because the images depict Snoopy diving into shallow water.

Figure 2.1. The correspondence between pictures is kept in the translation [Schultz, 2003: 100].

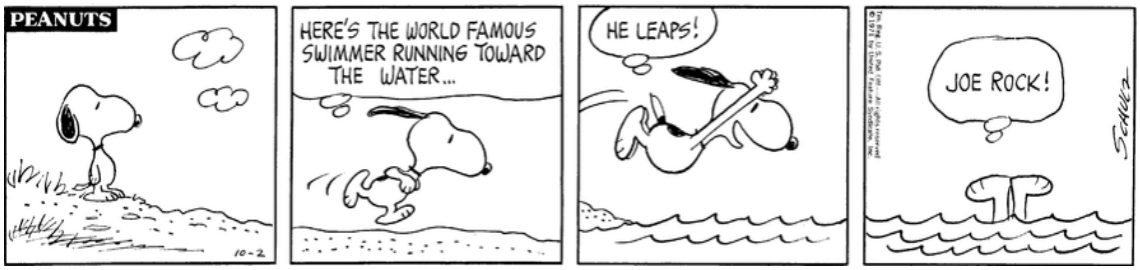


Figure 2.2. The original comic strip contains a pun, which was not kept in the Italian translation [Schultz, 1971].

The last panel is not translated literally because it contains a pun based on the name of Snoopy's alter ego (see Figure 2.2). "Joe Cool" becomes "Joe Rock" because the beagle hits its head diving into shallow water. In the Italian translation the pun is not kept, but

the meaning is conveyed underlining the importance of the collaboration between visual and verbal messages. In addition, the size of the speech bubble is small and an entire sentence does not fit it, but the two words *fondale basso* fit and are comprehensive for an Italian reader. The picture is clear and is not modified, so the Italian translation describes the situation depicted in the comic strip.

However, Zanettin (2009: 39) affirms that comics published in translation are often manipulated, and this manipulation may include the omission of panels or even pages, the retouching or redrawing of the layout and content. This manipulation can occur for many reasons. It rarely takes place for translation purposes, but often for cultural issues. Non-verbal signs are culture-bound; therefore, graphical conventions and images may be perceived differently and may convey various meanings. In manga pornographic images, elements which may offend readers, or particularly violent pictures are often removed (Jüngst, 2014: 62). This manipulation takes place above all when publishers aim the translation of a manga at target readers whose age is different from the age of the readers of the original manga.

Changes required by editors and publishers such as genre, readership, publication format, or a combination of the three, could affect translator's choices (Zanettin, 2014: 10). Since messages conveyed from both text and pictures have to make sense, not only must translators pay attention to verbal messages when translating, but also to visual components which underwent processes of manipulation (Zanettin, 2014: 21). Consequently, a translator adopts different translation strategies depending on the changes that form of production and distribution underwent. An example of this change is an early Italian translation of the American comic strips *Bringing up Father* by George McManus (translated as *Arcibaldo e Petronilla*) in which balloons were deleted, images retouched in conformity to Italian drawn stories, and rhymed sentences which narrate the stories were added below each panel.

According to Rota (2014: 84), the format of a published comic book influences translators' choices who decide to adopt a domestication or foreignization strategy when translating. The translation of a comic book is strictly linked to the format in which it is edited, which depends on the target culture. Therefore, there are three main possibilities used in editing which depend heavily on publishers' decisions. In particular, the publisher can decide to adapt the comic to a local format, keep the original, or adopt a third one

which differs both from the original and from the local one. Rota maintains that adopting a third format requires a heavy manipulation of the original comic book. Therefore, on the basis of the format of the comic, which is chosen by the publisher, foreignization or domestication strategies are followed. On the one hand, a foreignization strategy implies only minor adjustments and includes keeping original cultural and editorial characteristics of the comic book as much as possible, thus revealing its foreign origins. This strategy is commonly adopted in Italy, France, and Spain (Rota, 2014: 85). On the other hand, in editing a comic a domestication strategy involves a series of techniques which aim at fitting the taste of the target reading public. This strategy is usually adopted in culturally dominant countries like the United States where a domestication strategy implies a change in the original format and many alterations of the original comic (Rota, 2014: 87). In particular, some of these alterations are shrinking or magnification of pages and panels, colouring of black-and-white comics, publication of colour comics in black and white and mutilation of texts, which is often due to the fact that translators have to respect the size of balloons and so do not include all the pieces of information presented in the original comic book. Other alterations are omission of pages and panels, changes due to cultural or political censorship and, eventually, a re-arrangement of pages and panels, which in Rota's (2014: 88) view is one of the most devastating forms of alteration because it changes dramatically the graphic balance of the page created by the author.

To conclude, Celotti (2014: 42) affirms that the relationship between the visual and the verbal messages gives birth to a complex interplay the translator must pay special attention to therefore avoiding the risk of making a mistake and providing an opposite meaning in the translated text. However, comics are sometimes modified when their translations are sold to other countries and the manipulation can also affect their publication formats. For this reason, manipulations and changes are two relevant aspects that sometimes a translator has to face when translating a comic book because they may greatly affect the text. Eventually, translating a comic is a challenging task which requires particular inventiveness to render irony and humour properly by also finding an appropriate title (Celotti, 2014: 45).

2.1.2 The four potential *loci* of translation

Celotti (2014: 38) states that a translator's task is to decide whether a written message outside a balloon is either more visual or verbal. In other words, the translator has to pinpoint where the verbal message lies to spot *locus* of translation. Even though the translator's purpose is to translate all the verbal messages, Celotti claims that not all of them need to be translated and identifies four potential *loci* of translation: balloons, captions, titles, and elements of the linguistic paratext. In particular, balloons are the main place where the message is written since they contain the characters' words. Captions are usually at the top or at the bottom of the panel, they are in the third person and include comments which are related to time, place or pictures. Titles are potential *loci* of translation which can be translated or kept. The translation of titles depends heavily on marketing criteria: in the first half of the 20th century titles were adapted, e.g. the Italian version of *Bringing up Father* was translated as *Arcibaldo e Petronilla*, whereas since the 1960s they have been kept, especially when they include the protagonist's name (Kaindl, 2010: 38). In the English cover of Kai Ikada's *Hokkaido Gals Are Super Adorable!* (see Figure 2.3) the Japanese title is kept, and its English translation is also provided.

Figure 2.3. The Japanese title is kept, and its English translation is provided [Ikada, 2020].

The English title refers to more than one Hokkaido gal, i.e. a girl from the Hokkaido island. The Japanese morphing of the English word 'gal' is *Gyaru* (Kawamura, 2012: 52).

It used to refer to a Japanese subculture phenomenon and to identify college students who dye their hair, wear heavy make-up, and share a common slang and idioms, which are not understood by other Japanese people that do not belong to their group (Kawamura, 2012: 53).

The linguistic paratext involves all the verbal signs which can be found outside the balloon, yet inside the drawing, i.e. inscriptions, road signs, newspapers, onomatopoeias and so on. Therefore, translators have to decide whether to translate the linguistic paratext or not, since it can have both visual and verbal functions. On the one hand, the linguistic paratext sometimes includes relevant messages which are useful to understand the storyline, and in this case the translator has no choice but to translate it (Celotti, 2014: 39). By contrast, the linguistic paratext sometimes includes pieces of information which are not fundamental to the understanding. It is not necessary to translate the linguistic paratext when it comprises notions on the social, cultural or geographic context, or it contains puns and jokes. In these cases, translators should opt for the translation strategy which is more suitable to the context.

2.1.3 The translation strategies for the linguistic paratext

Celotti (2014: 39) underlines six different strategies which can be adopted by translators to translate the verbal message of the linguistic paratext. The verbal message of the linguistic paratext can be translated, explained in a footnote, culturally adapted, left untranslated or deleted. The above strategies can be mixed. The first strategy involves the translation of the verbal message and is usually followed when the message plays a crucial role in the diegesis (Celotti, 2014: 40). When the verbal message is fundamental to the understanding, yet it is deeply embedded in the drawing, translators often resort to a footnote, adding it often in the gutter below the panel. The third strategy is cultural adaptation and is commonly adopted when a translator decides to opt for an overall domestication perspective. In the Italian translation of comic *Jean-Claude Tergal* by Tronchet the names were domesticated, even the name of the bar *Chez Raoul*, which is written in the image, was changed and becomes *Bar Juventus* making a reference to an Italian football club. Another translation strategy is to leave the linguistic paratext untranslated because some messages are more visual than verbal and sometimes it is not necessary to translate them. In the Italian translation of the panel of Schultz's comic strip

the words in the stand “Psychiatric help 5¢. The doctor is in” are kept in English, even if they are useful for the understanding and help to convey the humorous effect (see Figures 2.4 and 2.5). However, the way in which Lucy sits, Charlie Brown’s facial expression and body language resemble a psychological visit. The drawn elements help to grasp the correct meaning without reading the words.

Figure 2.4. An example of the linguistic paratext [Schultz, 1971].

Figure 2.5. The verbal message of the linguistic paratext is left untranslated [Schultz, 2003].

Leaving messages in the source language may produce a kind of translational non-coherence, which can be avoided by deleting the message (Celotti, 2014: 40). Not all verbal messages of the linguistic paratext have the same importance, so the translator should choose whether to translate them or not on the basis of the aim of the verbal message. The names of the buildings and the billboards in the English translation of *My Hero Academia* are kept in Japanese because they are not fundamental to the understanding (see Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6. The verbal message of the linguistic paratext is left in Japanese [Horikoshi, 2014]

The picture depicts the fight that the main protagonist, Izuku Midoriya, is watching. The focus is on the heroes who are fighting against the giant villain, so what is written on the buildings is not fundamental to the understanding of the storyline. Nevertheless, the strategy of deleting the verbal message must not be confused with a thoughtless act of omission (Celotti, 2014: 41).

Finally, the last translation strategy identified by Celotti (2014: 40) involves mixing strategies in order to translate the verbal messages and the linguistic paratext within the same comic book.

2.1.4 The translation of sound effects

Sound effects are used in spoken language and in some literary works, but they are usually associated with comics and children literature (Mayoral Asensio, 1992: 108). Sound effects convey meaning; therefore, they are fundamental for the understanding and can add an artistic value to the comic when they are drawn in the picture. They are difficult to classify since they are usually followed by punctuation, typographic or graphic signs and may involve new creations (Valero Garcés, 1996: 227). Among the different categories of sounds which can be found in comics, Igareda (2017: 358) identifies inarticulate sounds, interjections, and onomatopoeias. Their graphic representations do not follow a strict convention: sound effects can be written in the balloons or in the drawings and can have different shapes, colours and layout. The repetition of letters and of punctuation signs to make a sound longer is fairly common in comics (Valero Garcés,

1996: 229). So, translating sound effects is complex and requires high levels of creativity (Jüngst, 2014: 60).

People process sounds in a different way depending on their mother tongue (Rampant, 2010: 233). Therefore, sound effects constitute a challenging task for translators because each language expresses them differently, e.g. in English a rooster goes "cock-a-doodle-doo", while in Italian it goes *chicchirichì.* The English language is rich in phono-symbolic forms and one of its well-known abilities is to reproduce inarticulate sounds and to create onomatopoeias, while Romance languages find it more difficult (Igareda, 2017: 345). The Japanese wide range of onomatopoeic effects offers fascinates many authors (Jüngst, 2014: 60). Onomatopoeias are extremely common in Japanese ordinary conversations, and the Japanese vocabulary includes many onomatopoeic verbs (Rampant, 2010: 223). Rampant (2010: 224) maintains that in Japanese smiling and silence produce a sound, respectively *nikoniko* and *shiiiin,* whereas in English these things do not make a sound.

Once translators were restricted by technical limitations, so they could not translate the sound when it was not inside the balloon (Igareda, 2017: 344). Many US sound effects begun being adopted in many European comic books and readers got used to finding foreign onomatopoeias in both translations and in their national comic book production (Igareda, 2017: 358). As a matter of fact, the manipulation of a comic was expensive and the price of the translated comic would rise considerably; therefore, sound effects outside the balloons were usually kept untranslated (Valero Garcés, 1996: 229). Nowadays manipulating a comic is easier and sound effects which are written in the drawing are usually translated.

It is worth distinguishing among several categories of sounds because their translation usually depends on the type, the person, the animal or the object producing them, and the meaning that they convey. The following classification is based on the studies of Liberman (2004) and Igareda (2017):

1. Sounds not made by humans at all, e.g., things falling, machines working, punches landing.
2. Biologically constrained human sounds, e.g., sneezes, cries of pain, laughter, breathing.
3. Sounds made by animals, i.e., woof, moo, roar.

4. Sounds made by nature, i.e., wind, thunder, earthquake.
5. Sounds made by the interaction between a human being and an object, e.g., knock, shot.
6. Filled pauses and other hesitation sounds such as the English “uh”, “um”, “er”.
7. Non-lexical vocal gestures, e.g., the clucking of the tongue.
8. The wider class of conventionalized interjections, i.e., the English “whoa” or “d'oh”.
9. Non-phonological onomatopoeic sounds, whether imitations of natural sounds or non-representative evocative noises.

As far as the translation of sound effects is concerned, some strategies often adopted by translators include looking for an equivalent in the target language, using words or sentences to transfer the meaning of the sound effect, keeping the original sound or adapting it to the graphic conventions of the target language (Valero Garcés, 1996: 228; Mayoral Asensio, 1992: 139). Translators usually adopt an equivalent when the sound is produced by a human and it expresses an attitude or a feeling, or when it is emitted by an animal (Valero Garcés, 1996: 235). As shown in the panel taken from Kai Ikada’s *Hokkaido Gals Are Super Adorable!* the sound effects drawn in the picture are kept in the Japanese alphabet and an English translation is provided (see Figure 2.7). Tsubasa Shiki is a sixteen-year-old boy who moved from Tokyo to Kitami, a city on the Hokkaido island, due to family circumstances. The main protagonist takes a deep breath while walking through the street, but it is too cold outside and the freezing air makes him cough.

Figure 2.7. The sound effects are kept in Japanese, but an English translation is provided [Ikada, 2020]

He produces human sounds: ‘gasp’ and ‘cough’ are onomatopoeic words related to the act of breathing and coughing. The protagonist is suffocating due to the cold, so he is catching his breaths convulsively and loudly and coughing. The Japanese sounds are fundamental for the understanding of the context, so their English translations are added to the picture.

When translating from English into another language, the English sound is kept when it is artificial, or it is produced during a fight (Valero Garcés, 1996: 235). Sounds that represent actions are usually left untranslated (Valero Garcés, 2014: 244), such as ‘slam’ which is often used to refer to the loud noise produced when a character shuts a door. Omission and compensation are used if there is no equivalent sound in the target language. Translators can omit the sound effect when its meaning is also conveyed by the other visual components (Mayoral Asensio, 1992: 139). The sound words are often adapted to sociocultural writing conventions, when the comic is intended for young readers (Kaindl, 2018: 247).

Ozumi (2009: 81) describes the translation strategies which are commonly followed by Italian translators of Japanese comics. They render onomatopoeias and sound effects through Italian onomatopoeias, English words or onomatopoeias, a mix between English and Italian onomatopoeias, i.e. using English words and onomatopoeias which have been traditionally used in Italian comics; creative translation, which can include transliteration and creative brand-new sound effects; omission. Sound effects in Japanese comics are usually translated in English through the words which convey the same meaning, e.g. Japanese silence sound effect is translated with the English noun ‘silence’ (Rampant, 2010: 224). Jüngst (2014: 60) adds other translation strategies which are adopted when translating onomatopoeias in manga. Translators basically are faced with three strategies: they can translate onomatopoeias using an equivalent in the target language, transliterate them or leave them in katakana, i.e. one of the three Japanese alphabets. The strategy of leaving the sound in Japanese may seem unsuitable for those readers who do not know Japanese, but it gives a sense of authenticity which pleases manga fans. The word which represents the sound may be beautifully written in katakana, therefore, leaving it may be a decision which adds to the aesthetic quality of the translated manga. When translators follow this strategy, they normally put a footnote to explain it. However, normally onomatopoeias in Japanese are not translated because they are

commonly embedded in the picture and translating them means retouching the picture, which is a quite expensive practice (Jüngst, 2014: 59).

2.1.5 The translation of humour

Puns and wordplay are complex to translate because humour and culture are strictly interwoven. In comics monomodal humour is given by either verbal or visual components, while multimodal humour is given by their blending. Many puns will be untranslatable, but their effect can be reproduced by transferring it into a different setting in the same text (Landers, 2001: 109-110). A joke can be rendered by way of literal translation and then explained through a foot note in the gutter. However, foreignizing a joke could impact the reading in two ways, firstly the reader gets interrupted; secondly, the reader may not understand the cultural equivalence (Rampant, 2010: 224).

In comics the techniques often adopted to create humour are verbal and non-verbal pun, parody, allusion, and intertextual reference (Kaindl, 2004: 174). Non-verbal plays on signs function basically on the same principles as verbal puns, i.e. they are based on dichotomous relationship and employ the polysemy of visual signs (Kaindl, 2004: 176). The translation of humour in comics can impact the semiotic composition of the sign-play, the type of humour employed, and the relation between text and picture (Kaindl, 2004: 175). Identifying the relation between the visual message and the verbal message is crucial in order to translate properly. Kaindl (2004: 176) outlines five distinct types of play on words and/or signs and provides some translation strategies to render them: plays on words consisting basically of linguistic signs, plays on words reinforced by non-verbal signs, plays on signs that depend on a multimodal combination, non-verbal plays on signs reinforced by verbal signs, and plays on signs consisting only of non-verbal elements.

When the visual component is subordinate to the verbal component and the picture plays only a supporting role, the translation of humour in comics does not differ heavily from the translation of humour in non-pictorial texts. When the visual component reinforces the linguistic play, but it is not integral to its effect, the translator can preserve the nature of the drawing and may change the type of humour. If the interplay between the visual and the verbal component is integral to the comic effect, the translator should keep the relation, although in principle it may be changed. In comics non-verbal sign-play can be found with or without verbal reinforcement (Kaindl, 2004: 182). When the

sign-play involves visual representations of objects that are specific to a particular culture, transferring it to another cultural context becomes particularly problematic. A translator can add a footnote, deleting the humour in the target text.

Based on the five picture-related categories, Kaindl (2004: 175) posits eight types of translation solutions. When monomodal humour is kept in the target text, a translator can adopt a similar humour technique or change it and the language-picture relation can be kept or not. In the case in which monomodal humour becomes multimodal in the target text, the humour technique employed can be modified or kept and the language-picture relation is changed. Monomodal humour can be omitted in the target text. Monomodal humour and a humour technique can be added in the target text; consequently, the language-picture relation is changed. When multimodal humour is kept in both the source text and the target text, the humour technique can be similar or different and the language-picture relation can be kept or modified. If in the source text humour is multimodal, but it is rendered as monomodal in the target text, the humour technique adopted to translate it can be similar to or different from the technique used in the source text and the language-picture relation has to be changed. If humour is multimodal in the source text, it can be omitted in the target text. Multimodal humour and a humour technique can be added to the target text, so the language-picture relation is changed.

In the comic strip drawn by Schultz Snoopy is looking at the sky, which is full of stars, so it decides to get a star-tan (see Figure 2.8). The humorous effect is reinforced by the visual elements, i.e. the depiction of a beautiful night, the stars, and the full moon. In the first panel the entire situation is depicted: the happy beagle is in a field and starts staring at the sky. In the second panel Snoopy gazes at the full moon and in the third one thinks that "there must be a billion stars in the sky". So, in the last panel the beagle lays on its camping tent — as if it is getting a tan — and thinks a funny absurdity: it is impossible to get tanned during the night.

Figure 2.8. An example of humour in a comic strip [Schultz, 1971].

Figure 2.9. This figure shows how humour is rendered in the Italian translation [Schultz, 2003].

In the Italian translation the speech bubbles are translated literally, and the drawings are not modified (see Figure 2.9). However, "star-tan" is translated as *tintarella di luna*, literally "moon-tan". *Tintarella di luna* is a famous Italian song by Mina, so the fourth panel contains a reference to the Italian culture. In the Italian translation the absurdity is kept and a cultural reference is added.

Finally, in comics the translator adopts a translation strategy depending on semiotic functional factors and on pragmatic factors, e.g. the cost of making changes to pictures, editorial policies, and the intended readership (Kaindl, 2004: 175). Humour may depend solely either on the visual or the verbal component, or it can be given by their combination. In the translation the modality of humour and the humour technique can be kept or changed.

2.1.6 The translation of culture-specific items and of cultural references

When translating a comic, a translator may have to face cultural-specific elements, which can be found both in the text and in the drawings. Kaindl (2004: 183) underlines Eco's (1972) position by stating that pictures have a code governed by conventions. Images and their understanding are strictly related to culture, therefore, culture-specific objects and behaviours depicted in comics can often lead to comprehension problems in translation. The conflict arising from any linguistically represented reference of a source text generates a translation problem which is due to the nonexistence or the different value that the given item has in the target language culture (Aixelá, 1996: 57). Therefore, the culture specific items arise from this conflict and depend on their function in the text (Aixelá, 1996: 58).

Manga are outstanding examples of the cross-cultural dimension of comics because they blend Japanese visual traditions with Korean, Chinese, and western influences, particularly American (Kaindl, 2018: 241). Therefore, a western reader does not easily pick up many intrinsic elements depicted in manga. In Japanese comics there

are culturally specific elements which need contextualizing for English readers, i.e. nose bleedings denote sexual excitement, the "okay" symbol made with one's thumb and forefinger is associate with money, a raised pinkie finger refers to one's girlfriend (Rampant, 2010: 224). An average English-speaking reader would not be aware of the fact that in *shōjo* manga a blank panel indicates that some time has passed between the preceding and the following panels. So, translators must decide a proper translation strategy which pleases the target audience and allows them to be faithful to the author's intent. Rampant (2010: 225) affirms that in early manga translations aspects of domestication were adopted by English translators, e.g. pages were flipped to read in left-to-right order, sound effects were translated, and honorifics were dropped from character's names.

Since readers are accustomed to different cultural conventions with regard to gesture, gaze and directionality, transformations such as the mirror inversion of pagination may influence the interpretation of some actions, scenes and movement, leading to either a gain or a loss in translation (Borodo, 2015: 26). A cultural issue related to inversion can be found in *Mugen no junin*, a samurai comic by Hiroaki Samura published as *L'Immortale* in Italy by Comic Art and Panini Comics (Rota, 2014: 94). The main character, Manji, wears a kimono with a swastika with arms oriented anticlockwise on its back, which is a Buddhist symbol. The swastika with clockwise-oriented arms was adopted by Nazism, so in a hypothetical inverted western version of this comic Manji would happen to wear a Nazi symbol instead of a Buddhist one. For this reason, in Italy this manga was published in non-inverted form.

As regards translation, Aixelá (1996: 60-62) identifies some procedures that can be used when translating culture-specific items in literary texts. They are divided from a lesser to a greater degree of intercultural manipulation of the cultural-specific items. The procedures which share a conservative nature are repetition, i.e. the original reference is kept, orthographic adaptation that includes procedures such as transcription and transliteration, linguistic (non-cultural) translation, i.e. a translator chooses a denotatively very close reference that can be recognized as belonging to the cultural system of the source text, e.g. the unit of measure 'inch' is translated in Italian as *pollice*. Extratextual gloss contains the translator's explanation of the meaning or implications of the cultural-

specific items and it is separate from the text. Similarly, intertextual gloss contains the translator's explanation, but it is included in the text.

Among the translation procedures which have a substitutive nature, Aixelá (1996: 63-64) includes synonymy, limited and absolute universalization, naturalization, deletion, autonomous creation, compensation, dislocation, and attenuation. Synonymy is used when the translator opts for some kind of synonym or parallel reference to avoid the repetition of the culture-specific item. Limited universalization involves the use of another reference of the source language culture which is less specific. Absolute universalization is used when the translator adopts a neutral reference, deleting any foreign connotations. Naturalization means to "bring the culture-specific items into the intertextual corpus felt as specific by the target language culture" (Aixelá, 1996: 63). Deletion is the omission of the culture specific item. Autonomous creation is an uncommon strategy in which the translator puts in some non-existent cultural references. Compensation involves the deletion of the cultural reference and the autonomous creation at another point of the text, conveying a similar effect of the source text. Dislocation is the displacement of the same culture-specific item. Attenuation is the replacement of the culture-specific item with one that is considered 'softer' and more adequate to the target readership.

In Schultz's comic strip Snoopy and Woodstock are celebrating Christmas. In the fourth panel of the English version the beagle is sick and complaints that it drinks too much root beer during office parties (see Figure 2.10). Root beer is an American soft drink (Smith 2012: 156). The beverage is the culture-specific item, but it is not possible to identify it from the drawing because the two characters are depicted with a white glass each. Therefore, the cultural element lies on the verbal level.

Figure 2.10. An example of a culture-specific item in a comic strip [Schultz, 1971].

Figure 2.11. The culture-specific item is omitted in the Italian translation [Schultz, 2003].

In the Italian version (see Figure 2.11) 'root beer' is omitted. By deleting the cultural-specific element, the message conveyed changes because in Italian *bere troppo* (literally 'to drink too much') implies that someone drinks too much alcohol. Therefore, for an Italian reader Snoopy and Woodstock seem drunk and not sick. However, the American beverage does not contain alcohol and children can drink it.

In the Italian translation of the 1970s of Schultz's comic strip the cultural-specific item 'pancakes' is translated as *frittelle*, i.e. traditional Italian soft round fried pastries that can also be filled with cream:

Figure 2.12. Another example of a culture-specific item in a comic strip [Schult, 1972]

Figure 2.13. The culture-specific item is domesticated in the Italian translation [Schultz, 2003].

Linus is sad because they don't have syrup, so he and Lucy have to eat their pancakes without it (see Figure 2.12). By domesticating the cultural-specific item (see Figure 2.13), the humorous effect is lost in the Italian translation because *frittelle* are not eaten with syrup. Nowadays the cultural reference would be kept and left untranslated because Italian people are more familiar with pancakes. Translators are affected by a progressive familiarity with Anglo-Saxon culture (Aixelá, 1996: 55). Therefore, shifting socio-cultural realities of the Anglo-Saxon culture requires less manipulation to make them acceptable in the target culture.

In comics cartoonist often use pictorial parodies of popular images or famous paintings (Kaindl, 2004: 185). However, the understanding of parody is strictly related to the target readership's background knowledge of the pictorial traditions, which is culture specific. So, the translator should choose whether to reduce multimodal humour to monomodal humour or keep it. Pictorial allusions and allusions involving elements of the visual culture are often found in comics, especially when the story is closely linked to the social, political, ideological, and cultural background (Kaindl, 2004: 187).

In Schultz's comic strip Lucy is singing *Tinkle, Tailor,* while skipping the rope (see Figure 2.14). It is a fortune-telling rhyme, used for counting, which has many variations, including 'Rich man, Poor man, Beggar man, Thief, Doctor, Lawyer, Indian (or merchant) chief' (Opie, 1951: 404). In the fourth panel the ending of the fortune-telling rhyme is changed because Lucy adds names of professions to keep counting her jumps.

Figure 2.14. An example of a cultural reference in a comic strip [Schultz, 1972].

Figure 2.15. The translation of a cultural reference [Schultz, 2003].

The first three panels containing the cultural reference are translated literally in Italian (see Figure 2.15). In the fourth one the names of professions are changed to make them rhyme: copywriter/visualizer, *cottimista* (i.e. a person paid the number of pieces finished rather than the amount of time spent in making them) *trapassista* (i.e. car broker). The cultural reference is lost in the Italian translation, but rhymes are added.

The vocative and honorifics are complex to translate since each language has its own way to express them, e.g. in some languages it is common to address people by their profession. English does this in the case of doctors, judges, professors, political

officeholders, and military ranks, in France it would extend to policemen, i.e. *Monsieur l'agent* and other occupations, while in Latin American cultures pharmacists, engineers, teachers, and architects would be included (Landers, 2001: 137). The way in which people perceive the forms of address depends on their culture, e.g. in Anglo-Saxon nations to address a friend as 'Fat man,' 'Skinny,' or 'Shorty' can be offensive, but in Spanish America addressing a friend as *Gordo*, *Flaco*, or *Bajito* can even convey affection (Landers, 2001: 137-138).

As far as Japanese honorifics are concerned, there are many controversial issues in their use and translation in manga. Jüngst (2014: 61) maintains that the most common honorifics in Japanese comics are usually kept in translation, i.e., *-kun* used for boys and young men, *-chan* for girls and young women, *-san* used for men, and *-sensei* for addressing a teacher. In translated manga publishers often include a list where both the meaning and the use of honorifics and some common expressions are explained (Jüngst 2014: 62).

Finally, the translation of comics involves the transfer of linguistic and visual components, so a translator must be familiar with the culture-specific traditions and conventions of the comics culture of the source and target language (Kaindl, 2018: 241). Strands of reference to previous knowledge are a real challenge for translators (Hatim and Mason, 1990: 123). Consequently, translators should look for an explanation of these elements, while facing the other challenging translation problems relating to comics translation.

2.1.7 The translation of proper names

Proper names may convey meaning or a humorous effect, may be related to culture, or be names of real historical characters. They can be kept, adapted to pre-established translation norms, or changed. The previous translations, the translator's background and the conservative audience influence the translator's choices (Balteiro, 2010: 37). A solution for the rendering of characters' names of a specific comic — which has been adopted in previous translations — is usually followed by other translators because they are aware of the readership's previous experience, therefore, in this case they seldom adopt an autonomous creation.

In comics the high degree of expressivity and creativity of characters' proper names, achieved through word-formation mechanisms such as compounding, derivation and stylistic resources, e.g. alliteration or onomatopoeia, can be extremely challenging to transfer in the target language (Balteiro, 2010: 33). A name may express specific features, qualities, and connotations of a character, which are difficult to convey in a target language. Nowadays it seems that there is not a common trend regarding names in comics translation (Balteiro, 2010: 37).

Aixelá (1996: 59) identifies two categories of proper names: conventional proper nouns and loaded names. Conventional proper nouns do not have a specific meaning. In translation they can be kept, transcribed, or transliterated, when there is not a pre-established translation based on traditions (Aixelá, 1996: 60). In the English translation of *The Adventure of Asterix* the names of real historical characters like Cleopatra and Julius Caesar are kept in English with the appropriate spelling (Delesse, 2014: 253).

Loaded proper names and nicknames include fictional and non-fictional proper nouns that can express a meaning or have certain historical or cultural associations, which they accrued in a particular culture (Aixelá, 1996: 60). They display a tendency towards the linguistic translation of their components. In the English translation of *Tintin* and *The Adventure of Asterix* names are translated, but the protagonists' ones are kept either because they are easy to pronounce or because their meaning is the same in both the source language and the target language (Delesse, 2014: 253). In the English and in the Italian translations of the manga *Naruto* the names of the characters are transcribed in Roman characters from Japanese, even though they may have a meaning. Kakashi Hatake is one of Naruto's teachers and according to the *Tuttle Pocket Japanese Dictionary* (2012: 74-114) the Japanese word *kakashi* means 'scarecrow' and *hatake* 'field'. The name of Obelix's dog in the original French comic book, *Astérix*, is Idefix that comes from the combination of the noun *ideé* with the adjective *fixe* (literally 'fixed idea' or 'obsession') (Delesse, 2014: 259). Its literal English translation with the addition of the suffix *ix*, 'Fixed-idea-ix', would be difficult to pronounce and to decipher visually, so in both the British English and the American versions of the comic the dog was called Dogmatix (Delesse, 2014: 260). Even though 'dogmatic' is not the exact equivalent for *ideé fixe*, it is not far from the original idea and has the advantage of containing the word 'dog'.

Translating the characters' names can lead to delete or add connotations in the source language. Therefore, the translator's task is to find appropriate solutions so that proper names and their connotations are perfectly tuned to the contents of the comic book.

2.2 Relay translation

2.2.1 English as a vehicular language

Nowadays English is considered a dominant language which can be used as a transitional or vehicular one, especially when translating Japanese comics (Ringmar, 2007: 1; Zanettin, 2009: 39). The German comic book market was dominated by English and French translations until the 1990s (Jüngst, 2014: 50). The first translated manga for the German comic book market was Keiji Nakazawa's *Hadashi no Gen* which was translated indirectly from English to German. In addition, today many manga and anime fans — who do not know Japanese — translate their favourite Japanese comics or animated series from English translations, which can be official or crowdsourced, into their own language.

However, sometimes fans do not necessarily translate directly from Japanese into English or indirectly from English into another target language, even though nowadays English is one of the most spoken languages in the world. Rampant (2010: 227) affirms that thanks to a greater availability of Chinese translators, in many cases Chinese works as the source language and not English. So, using picture material from a third country, and not from Japan, became a standard feature of manga translation (Jüngst, 2014: 55).

As regards the translation of anime, Parini (2012: 332) maintains that now in Italy anime series are generally translated from English and translators are provided with the English script. However, this procedure may lead to various problems. Translators face problems related to isochrony since Japanese, English and a third language, e.g. Italian, are completely different languages or possibly because English translators may have made changes due to censorship when translating the text of the anime series.

Finally, the procedure of translating from a source language to a target language through a third language is an example of relay or indirect translation. The focus of this thesis is on Japanese comics which have been translated into English and then into Italian. Therefore, the following sections aim to investigate some features of translation from Japanese into English, and relay and indirect translation.

2.2.2 Translation from Japanese into English: a brief overview

As regards the translation from Japanese, Wakabayashi (1991: 231) provides some editorial changes that translators can follow: make implicit elements explicit, prune superfluous material, and modify sentence order. The aim of these changes is to improve both readability and comprehensibility and they are justified when they are useful to convey the original message (Wakabayashi, 1991: 224). Sometimes translating literally a sentence from Japanese into English may not be appropriate because it may lead to an incorrect translation from a grammatical point of view (Wakabayashi, 1991: 226). A literal translation from Japanese into English may give readers a distorted impression of the original text, even though the translation is grammatically correct (Wakabayashi 1991: 231). Therefore, the translators' task is to provide readers with a stylistic effect similar to that of the Japanese text in order to achieve the same effect through means suitable to English, although it involves changes to the original Japanese content (Wakabayashi, 1991: 228).

Jüngst (2014: 57) maintains that loanwords in Japanese texts are entertaining to translate because most of the time they are used just as an effect, look beautiful or elegant and in these cases their meaning is secondary or not important. The appearance of foreign languages like English and German in Japanese comics is usually a sign of the exotic or the fantastic and a method of distancing (Curran 2015). Japanese authors borrow words especially from English and German to create catchy titles, or because the vocabulary is linked to a certain field. In the manga *Neon Genesis Evangelion* many terms related to the psyche and the nervous system are in German. Loanwords do not sound grotesque in Japanese, yet they do when they are translated into the language in which those loanwords come from (Jüngst, 2014: 58). To avoid unwanted humour and to not sound strange, a translator should add a foot note which explains that a term has been used as a loanword in the original Japanese text. Another possibility to translate loanwords is to use another term which is more suitable in the target language. When Japanese authors transliterate English words in katakana alphabet, the words may be transliterated back to English in Roman letter to sound more Japanese, or a translator can use the proper English words, e.g. the series *Furūtsu Basuketto* is published in Germany with the correct correspondent English words *Fruit Basket*.

In Wakabayashi's opinion readers should be introduced gradually into the world of Japanese literature (1991: 224). However, Jüngst (2014: 56) claims that manga readers are not usually pleased by the fact that in comics translation there will always be losses and gains. Manga fans are conscious that they are reading translations, but they expect them to offer a faithful reading experience as much as possible. Fans basically want a formally equivalent translation, since they are willing to read translated manga which look Japanese both in the linguistic and pictorial aspect. Many plots of the current Japanese comics are not so culturally specific and translations do not need to be formally equivalent in every single respect to please manga readership (Jüngst, 2014: 57).

2.2.3 Relay, indirect and support translation

At times translators do not translate directly from a language, called source language (SL), into another language, target language (TL), which is usually their mother tongue, but may through a third (or fourth, etc.) intermediary language (Dollerup, 2000: 17). There are different ways to term this peculiar translation process. St André (2009: 230) names it 'relay translation' and defines it as "the translation of a translated text (either spoken or written) into a third language", e.g. from Chinese to English, then from English to Portuguese. Translating from a source language through means of another language to reach a final target language is quite common in non-professional translations of manga.

Translating from a minor language into a dominant one may give more relevance to a text, which then can be retranslated into another language through its translation into a dominant language (Washbourne, 2013: 615). Many classic woks of world literature found their way into languages of limited diffusion because they had been translated indirectly (Landers, 2001: 131). Therefore, indirect translation plays an important role in connecting culture (Ringmar, 2007: 1). The most common language which is used as a vehicle to translate indirectly from one language to another is English, thanks to its contemporary value as a *lingua franca*. This explains why there are relatively few translations into English, but at the same time English translations are used as mediators in indirect translation (Ringmar, 2007: 12).

The procedure of using English as a source language to translate indirectly manga into other languages is a fairly popular phenomenon. AnimWorld is an Iranian non-professional translation community which is primarily active in translating Japanese

comics from English into Persian (Delforouz *et al*., 2018: 96). However, many instances of indirect translation which involve other languages can be found. Another example of indirect translation in the publication of comic books is *The Adventures of Tintin* which was published in the early 1970s in Iran. This comic book had been originally written in French and later translated into Persian from English (Delforouz *et al*., 2018: 97). However, this translation procedure is also adopted in other contexts and may involve the use of more than three languages and cultures. Tolstoy's *War and Peace* was translated from French into other European languages rather than directly from Russian (Landers, 2001: 130).

Dollerup (2000: 17) identifies three different translation processes which involve more than two languages, i.e. relay, indirect and support translation. The term 'relay translation' refers to intermediary texts directed to an actual audience, in other words, the source language from which the translation has been carried out differs from the original language of the work (Dollerup, 2000: 19). The European translations of Shakespeare's work in the 18th century are an outstanding example because it had firstly been translated from English to French by Voltaire and Abbé Prévot and then from French to Spanish (Dollerup, 2000: 22). The context in which relay translation is more visible to audiences is in simultaneous conference interpreting, especially when it involves minor languages (Dollerup, 2000: 21).

As far as indirect translation is concerned, Dollerup (2000: 18) maintains that the term 'indirect translation' is used to refer to those intermediate texts that are not intended for genuine consumers and to those situations where "two parties must communicate by means of a third intermediary realization". Ringmar (2007: 3) claims that it is an antonym of direct translation. Washbourne (2013: 613) states that indirect translation — as Dollerup interprets it — can be exemplified further with intralingual translation, team translation and interlingual plagiarism.

Nowadays relay and indirect translations are commonly used in international organizations — where relay interpreting also takes place —, in the publishing industry, especially of devotional and literary texts, in translating historical texts, in audio-visual translation, and in the global news industry (Washbourne, 2013: 608). Authors who won Nobel Prizes in Literature are usually awarded the prize based on readings of relay translations (Washbourne, 2013: 609).

Indirect and relay translation may occur because there is a lack of translators who master both the source and the target language (Washbourne, 2013: 611). These procedures are adopted when the access to a tangible original is not possible, or the copyright and the authorial control exercise power over works and translations, or the original work is no longer available. Furthermore, they are carried out when there is a relative distance between the source language and the target language. In other words, if a source language L1 and a target language L3 are too distant, but another target language L2 and L3 have an affinity, L1 can reach L3 through L2.

The relative prestige of the languages and the texts involved is the reason why relay and indirect translation procedures occur (Washbourne, 2013: 612). Languages and writers may have different political dimensions (Washbourne, 2013: 608). Not only is the prestige of the languages and texts involved relevant, but also the prestige of a translation (Washbourne, 2013: 612). A translation of a trusted expert translator may give rise to others, e.g. Adrián Recino's Spanish classical translation of *Popol Vuh* gave birth to translations into Italian, English and Japanese.

Furthermore, according to Washbourne (2013: 612) other reasons why relay and indirect translations are carried out are cost, author's preference, when an intermediate text can provide an edit of the L1 — so it saves publishers the effort of re-editing — or when an intermediate text can serve a censorial purpose. So, there are many reasons and situations in which translators have to resort to relay and indirect translation procedures.

Dollerup (2000: 24) maintains that translators may consult previous translations, which can also be in another language that is not their target one. This procedure can provide a potential repertoire of translation shifts or strategies (Washbourne, 2013: 617). Washbourne (2013: 614) adds 'legacy translation' which includes re-use of phrasing. It has subtypes and variations such as retranslations and modernizations, which can be interlingual or intralingual. Intralingual modernizations deal with a single language in its historical progression, or a language which underwent a series of drastic shifts that complicated its genealogy, e.g. ancient and modern Greek. Another variation of support translation is back translation which has two subtypes. One is a translation which influences subsequent editions of the source text, the other is the source novel reconstruction from translations. A novel, which was originally lost, can be rewritten thanks to its translations.

To sum up, relay translation is an intermediate translation aimed at a readership, indirect translation is an intermediate translation which is not meant to be used, and finally, support translation which involves consulting previous translations of the same text. They are quite common procedures which embrace various fields of translation and contexts.

2.2.4 What count as relay and indirect translations?

There are many taboos related to both indirect and relay translations and a strong aversion to these procedures has developed (Washbourne, 2013: 608). Washbourne (2013: 609) affirms that these procedures are often scorned because they do not strictly belong to translation and are considered impure, corrupt, and degenerate. Sometimes the question whether these procedures should be tolerated or not often depends on the languages involved, whether they are less common or dominant, the readership, that is, if a relay translation is aimed at a specialized or lay readership, and the gap between the professional code and the actual procedure (Washbourne, 2013: 610).

A common belief is that indirect translation leads to poorer results and many mistakes if compared with direct translation (Ringmar, 2007: 9). Relay and indirect translations may lead to mistakes or confusion as a translator can make mistakes when shifting from a language to another, mistakes which will be repeated later in the translation of the translated text. Any errors or misinterpretations in T1 are reproduced in T2, which cannot be compared with the source text (Landers, 2001: 131). These mistakes are due to the translator's or interpreter's misunderstanding of the original sender, e.g. an interpreter can misunderstand if speakers use slang, hit the microphone, turn their heads, or mumble (Dollerup, 2000: 21). Furthermore, translators may make necessary cultural adjustments in their translations, since culture plays a crucial role (Ringmar, 2007: 11). As it occurs for mistakes, cultural adjustments will then pass to the translation of the translation, but they may be unnecessary for another culture. An indirect translation can thus inevitably produce differences, which often are not accepted. For these reasons, translators should inform the audience that has been provided an indirect translation (Landers, 2001: 131).

As regards the way in which these procedures are perceived institutionally, Washbourne (2013: 610) identifies two clauses from the UNESCO Recommendation on

the Legal Protection of Translators and Translations and the Practical Means to Improve the Status of Translators and comments on them. The first clause explains that as a general rule a translation should be carried out from the source language of the original work. A translator may have to resort to retranslation only when necessary. In the second it is affirmed that translators should translate into their mother language, or into a language which they master like their mother tongue. A loophole can be found in this clause, since it says that translators should work into languages they master, but no source language mastery is prescribed. Consequently, if read alone this second clause leaves the door open to collaborative translation of work from a source language of which a translator may have no knowledge.

The Spanish association of writers (Sección Autónoma de Libros de la Asociación Colegial de Escritores de España [ACE-Traductores]) claims that translators can use a translated work when a translation cannot be made from the original text, but they have to secure the permission of the author and credit the translator whose work has been consulted. Sometimes authors themselves promote these translation procedures, especially relay translation. They auto-translate their work into a link language, so their translation can work as a pivot source (Washbourne, 2013: 612). Therefore, these procedures may also be accepted in professional context, even though institutions recommend that professional translators should avoid them whenever possible.

2.2.5 Variations to relay and indirect translations

These translation procedures were also adopted in the past and have undergone changes over the centuries. For this reason, Washbourne (2013: 612) summarises some variations of both relay and indirect translations which can be traced in literary history. The number of translations of a work has increased over the centuries, and various more recent translations — including translation within the same language — can work like pivot sources, thus becoming modernized versions of a work (Washbourne, 2013: 613). Relay and indirect translations have been used to translate into a new vehicular language and new authorship, e.g. Odysseas Elytis'*Sappho* was initially translated from Ancient Greek into modern Greek and then into Italian (Washbourne, 2013: 612).

Another variation refers to the fact that translators may choose to make their translation into their target L3 based on triangulations of two translations of the same source language L21 and L22, or triangulation of translations into different languages.

Intergenic indirect translations are those translations into different languages and genres, e.g. Aesop's work was translated into Latin by Phaedrus then into Greek verse by Babrius, and into Latin verse by Avianus later, and it was finally rendered in prose paraphrases (Washbourne, 2013: 613). The shifts of relay and indirect translations may be linguistic, structural, poetic or ideological.

Other variations are a transcreation into L4 based on an L3 triangulation of an L1 and an L2 semi-pseudo-translation, a direct translation from a source language L1 into a target language L2 which gives rise to an adaptation in another target language L3, a self-translation to a vehicular language which is followed by a relay translation, and a translation of a text which can work as a source text for another translation that in turn works as a source text when the original source text is no longer available. Many other variations of relay and indirect translations can be identified in literary history since there are many examples which can be provided.

2.3 Crowdsourcing

The translation process has become very interactive through the development of web-based technologies, which also changed the production of comics (Kaindl, 2018: 249). Many non-professional translation groups have begun uploading their translations to the Internet and their translated texts sometimes worked as source texts for further translations. After providing a brief definition of the translation procedures of relay, indirect and support translation, it is worth investigating an ongoing and quite recent online phenomenon, i.e. crowdsourcing, since it affects both professional translators and translations. However, crowdsourcing is a widespread phenomenon which not only concerns the translation of manga, but also the translations of other types of texts which can be carried out online by a group of people. It is interesting also because the Italian translation analysed in chapter three is crowdsourced.

According to the European Commission, in 2006 Jeff Howe coined the term crowdsourcing as a word which combines the terms "crowd" and "outsourcing". Ambati *et al.* (2012: 1191) define crowdsourcing as to

> broadly belong to the language or vision community, where for a number of tasks it is either impossible or challenging and time-consuming for computers to complete them, whereas only requires a few seconds for a human to complete.

Some examples of these tasks which are impossible or challenging for computers are identifying a person in a photo or the sentiment in a text, tagging a video for a particular event, and flagging an email as spam. These tasks can be carried out by a person or a group of people. O'Hagan (2009: 98) maintains that in the current online environment, which has seen the raise of virtual communities where people congregate and work together on self-selected projects and the development of a better and wider range of cutting-edge tools required to produce content in electronic form, two types of volunteer translator networks arose. Mission-oriented networks, whose members are engaged in technical translations related to open-source software, and subject-oriented networks, whose members translate online-documents which support the original authors' point of view.

The development of crowdsourcing re-shaped traditional media, which were vectors of translation such as the press (Cronin, 2010: 4). Nowadays the changes in the medium by which books, newspapers, studies, comics, essays, and other texts affect the way in which their contents are used, experienced, understood, and translated. The concept of user-generated translation may highly and significantly impact translation as a profession. The Web leads to a proliferation of crowdsourced translations and open translation projects such as Project Lingua, Worldwide Lexicon, Wiki Project Echo, TED Open Translation Project and Cucumis.

The European Commission (2012: 35) adds that crowdsourcing influences translation and the way in which translation theories are perceived. Non-professional translators appear to privilege translator's visibility, even though this approach is regarded as hardly viable for commercial products. Crowdsourcing also affects the way in which a translator approaches a target audience. Cronin (2010: 4) maintains that a translator usually does a translation for an audience, but in crowdsourcing the audience becomes an active producer or prosumer, since this model is consumed oriented.

As regards serious concerns and fears about the status and prospects of translators in the future, the European Commission (2012: 37) summarises some of them. The first concern regards the fact that translators will lose their source of income if non-professional translators do their job for free. The second is that companies may exploit and make profit from free labour. The third one regards translation quality since non-professional translators commonly lack specific qualification and expertise. All these

concerns and fears have opened a debate among professional translators. Nevertheless, O'Hagan (2009: 114) underlines the importance of participating in the debate with an open mind and a serious determined effort to understand the emerging contexts. Through a deep analysis of the facts, it will be possible to critically assess the situation. Cutting age technologies and the new digital world offer new working conditions and possibilities, even though they may raise ethical issues. Translators should be able to adapt to changes, which may be leveraged to further enhance and progress their profession (O'Hagan, 2009: 115). However, crowdsourcing and the development in technology does not solely affect translators, but also authors, editors, distributors, and publishing houses, especially in the case of manga and anime.

Since this thesis focuses particularly on relay translation and crowdsourced translated manga, it is worth analysing crowdsourcing in relation to the translation of Japanese comics and animated series. O'Hagan (2009: 99) maintains that fan groups were the first to adopt the possibility to collaborate and express a collective voice on the Internet, regardless of the physical distance among group members. They manage to cleverly use technology and organize their workflow shared among team members to produce user-generated translations (O'Hagan, 2009: 101). This event has led to a significant modification in the nature of fandom. Fans are no longer mere spectators, now they are both active prosumers and consumers because they consume their favourite products and translate them into their own languages (O'Hagan, 2009: 99). The best-known early form of users-generated-translation was the translation of anime series, i.e. fans self-produce subtitles which circulate globally, whereas the process of translating Japanese comics spread later. These processes, called respectively "digisub" and "scanlation", involve many participants who fulfil different tasks and take advantage of digital production and communication environments. They also translate videogames that are intended for pc and consoles. The term coined to indicate fan translation of video games is 'translation hacking' that it is "indicative of the breach of legality relating to computer hackers" (O'Hagan, 2009: 111). Fans who localise video games dedicate significantly more time in the process of localisation than those who are involved in "fansub" or "scanlation" activities (O'Hagan, 2009: 108). Therefore, non-professional translators have a strong motivation, especially those who work on localization of videogames because they spend considerable time on their projects.

The spread of fan translations and crowdsourced translations distributed for free raised various ethical questions that involves piracy and professional translators' position in the market. *LinkedIn* offers an outstanding example to make clear this crucial aspect (O'Hagan, 2009: 114). The high-profile social networking site asked professional translators how they feel if they would take part in the crowdsourced translation of the *LinkedIn* website for free. Not surprisingly, their reaction was negative, and this led to the formation of the group "Translators against Crowdsourcing for Commercial Business".

Distributing fans' translations of anime and manga on the Internet is illegal because fans usually do not pay copyrights to the original owners. However, many Japanese major studios often promote "fansubbing" movements because they think that these illegal movements encourage the sales of merchandising, and thus the studios can regain the profits of the anime series that have not been sold (Chambers, 2012: 97). Publishers and official distributors tolerate "scanlations" and "digisub" because they often pilot commercial publication (Zanettin, 2014: 11). "Digisub" facilitates the formation of a demand of anime where it is unknown such as in the US and elsewhere (O'Hagan, 2009: 111). By contrast, other Japanese companies and studios do not support "fansubbing" movements because they are illegal (Chambers, 2012: 98).

Although merchandising recovers some of the costs of piracy, the ethical dilemma remains and has to be faced (Chambers, 2012: 99). Many "fansub" groups adhere to the principle that they will retrieve their translated versions when an official one comes out in the market (O'Hagan, 2009: 111). However, retrieving fan translated versions makes little difference once they have been circulated online. Various "scanlation" sites have been shut down, even though many publishing companies tolerate them because many "scanlation" groups delete their archived work and urge fans to buy the official version once it comes out (Rampant, 2010: 227). Despite the correct behaviour of some groups, others that keep issuing work even after the official release of the translated manga commit digital piracy. Nowadays digital content piracy has increased both due to the digitalization of products and the availability of communication networks (O'Hagan, 2009: 111).

According to O'Hagan (2009: 112), another important aspect of crowdsourcing is motivation. The first instances of crowdsourcing launched by *Facebook* in 2007 make

clear why motivation is relevant. Users were asked to translate selected parts of the popular social network into different languages by using the application *Facebook Translations,* which allows users to provide their translation and to evaluate the contributed translations thanks to a voting mechanism. This voting mechanism provides contributors with a motivational factor since it shows the number of positive votes they achieved for their work.

Motivation is a fundamental aspect in crowdsourcing since non-professional translators are not paid for their work (Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 95). Therefore, it is interesting to study the reasons why non-professional translators have a strong motivation in translating for free. Delforouz *et al.* (2018: 95) identify some of the reasons: the possibility to realize one's potential, i.e. fans have an opportunity to do something different and demonstrate their ability to function as translators who are able to localize a product, translate a book and subtitle audio-visual material. Fans may be willing to learn how to translate and provide a specific feature which is not provided in the official translation, or they are willing to provide a translation which may replace a low-quality one they read. Non-professional translators are ambitious and have the desire to make people aware that thanks to them other fans can have a product in their language. Fans translate for fun, to provide people the content of manga and anime, or to improve their language skills, especially their English (Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 99). For these reasons, fans form a well-motivated collaborative community which has a deep knowledge of the product (O'Hagan, 2009: 113).

To sum up, there are four key aspects of fan translation networks (O'Hagan, 2009: 101). The first is the collaboration afforded by technology which allows fans to form groups, undertake a project and achieve a production which sometimes is close to a professional production in terms of workflow and timeframe. The second is the fact that fans' translated products are a free pre-publicity, regardless their dubious legal status. The third is fans' strong motivation. The fourth concerns the fact that fans' lack of knowledge in the field of translation is sometimes compensated by their detailed knowledge of the product.

Finally, nowadays not only is fan translation performed from Japanese into English, but also into different languages (O'Hagan, 2009: 107). Crowdsourcing allows people to meet other cultures thanks to the distribution of products from other countries

via Internet. Japanese comics seem to have made their first appearance in Iran around 2002, thanks to the activities of non-professional translators (Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 97). Manga have never been published in Iran because of the negative prejudices, so now they can enter the country only thanks to crowdsourcing (Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 98). The doubtful legal status of the translation of scanned manga and the subtitling of anime and their distribution online without the permission of the original authors arises an ethical dilemma, even though many Japanese publishing companies support fan translation groups because they may generate a demand for a specific comic or anime series. The development of new technologies and the fact that nowadays the number of non-professional translators online has grown may constitute a change (O'Hagan, 2009: 114). Translators should face new changes and improve their abilities to adapt to this new situation, in this way they will able to take advantage of them (O'Hagan, 2009: 115). Crowdsourcing conveys both positive and negative aspects; however, it depends on the single person to identify its benefits and leverage them.

2.3.1 "Digisub"

As to non-professional translations of anime, Chambers (2012: 97) provides a concise definition of "digisub" or anime "fansub" phenomenon by saying that it is "the practice of taking the original Japanese anime and translating it word-for-word in fan-made subtitles*"* and distributing the product for free. The early appearance of this phenomenon goes back to the 1980s and it was expensive because fans used VHS tapes (O'Hagan, 2009: 100). However, today "fansub" productions, often called "digisub", are cheaper thanks to the current state-of-the-art developments in digital technology.

It is carried out by non-professional translators who are studying Japanese (Chambers, 2012: 97). However, being non-expert in the field of subtitling, fans usually do not follow the norms of audio-visual translation (O'Hagan, 2009: 100). Sometimes they consciously decide to not to follow these norms, because they are willing to fight against censorship and the official over-edited versions of anime which are broadcast on television networks outside Japan. Since these non-professional translators manage to obtain the original anime series, they have access to the entire content without any cut made by the American censorship, so they can translate it without cuts (Chambers, 2012: 97).

As regards the quality of fan groups' translations, it depends mainly on the translator's fluency and knowledge of the language. The quality can be variable, but sometimes fans' lack of knowledge in the field of translation is compensated by their genre-knowledge (O'Hagan, 2009: 101). Zaidan and Callison-Burch (2011: 1220) affirm that often non-expert translators provide low-quality disfluent translations, but they can sometimes provide high-quality products.

Non-professional translators make some mistakes due to a lack of knowledge in the field, e.g. they do not know and follow the norms of subtitling (O'Hagan, 2009: 101). However, fan translation approaches are slowly seeping through to official productions in anime subtitles and producers sometimes hire fan translation groups to produce an official version.

To sum up, the practice of subtitling anime arose in the 1980s and allows non-professional translators to provide a product which is uncut and to introduce in the country anime series which are not broadcast.

2.3.2 "Scanlation"

The process of translating and distributing manga online, i.e. "scanlation" is a more recent phenomenon, than the "digisub" one (O'Hagan, 2009: 100). Before 1980s manga were adapted to the target culture conventions and sold as merchandise to their anime counterparts (Rampant, 2010: 222). Their texts were usually rewritten and their pictures were occasionally redrawn. Fans complained about these manipulations made by the publishers and they heavily criticised translators because of their tendency to "Americanize" Japanese comics (Rampant, 2010: 224). In addition, many manga titles which appealed to fans were not available in the bookstores of their countries (Rampant, 2010: 222). Nowadays the situation is not largely changed, since many manga readers are sceptical about some of the official translated versions as they observe that sometimes translators, publishers and editors who are involved with the official translations take liberties or do not have a detailed knowledge of the product (O'Hagan, 2009: 105). Therefore, some of them began translating their favourite Japanese comics and distributing their translations online, thus giving birth to crowdsourced translated manga.

The term "scanlation" derives from the combination of 'scan' and 'translation' (O'Hagan, 2009: 100). "Scanlation" consists in a series of processes which includes scanning, translating, and distributing on the Internet unofficial electronic editions of

Japanese comics (Zanettin, 2014: 11). Once the intended usage of fans' online translations was that readers bought a copy of a manga in Japanese and read the English text online with the original book in the hand (Rampant, 2010: 226). Successively, thanks to the development of technology English-speaking fans and Japanese-speaking fans began working together to place the English text over the scanned image of the original manga, thus producing "scanlations" which were distributed online.

Each "scanlation" group comprises an organized team of translators, editors, photo-manipulators who place the text onto the image, and scanners, whose task is to scan digitally the original comics. Online translation groups add pages that may include recruiting advertisement, announcements or commentaries and a scanlation credit page, which contains a list of common production roles in the scanlation workflow, e.g. translators, cleaners, and typesetters (Douglass *et. al.,* 2011). Nowadays non-professional translators of Japanese comics store onsite their scanned comics either as zip files available for download, or display the original scanned manga as html pages, thus creating an online reading experience.

2.3.3 Differences between non-professional and professional translations

Many fans complained about the changes which Japanese comics underwent during the process of translation and manipulation due to censorship, so they began to study Japanese in order to translate their favourite manga (Rampant, 2010: 222). Through the development of the Internet in the United States in 1990s translating and distributing manga online became widespread and some of the non-professional translators' choices have eventually directed professional translators' decisions (Zanettin, 2014: 11).

Rampant (2010: 223) summarises fans' translation strategies by stating that they leave Japanese forms of address, translate sound effects and onomatopoeia or transliterate them in Roman alphabet, without looking for equivalents in the target language, and keep the Asian reading orientation. For Iranian fans it is easier to translate manga since both Persian and Japanese follow the same reading orientation (Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 104). By contrast, for both Westerns non-professional and professional translators to translate correctly following the Asian orientation is more challenging, since following a different reading orientation from the source language could lead to interpretation and comprehension problems (Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 103).

"Scanlations" are produced by fans for fans and are aimed at expert readers. Therefore, fans opt for foreignization strategies, e.g. leaving honorifics untranslated (Rampant, 2010: 227). However, sometimes even in fans' translations honorifics are explained, thus giving novice English-speaking manga readers the understanding of character's social status that Japanese readers already have. Martial arts terms, weapons or techniques names are usually transliterated in the speech bubble, but when they are translated, non-professional translators place them along the border of the page or in gutters. Fans usually add translation notes which explains the martial techniques or with the literal translation of it. They may omit onomatopoeias if there is a lack of a corresponding onomatopoeic expression in their native language (Delforouz *et al*., 2018: 102). Two translation strategies often adopted by non-professional translators are typographical modification and displacement (Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 103). Typographical modification involves reducing the font size and using a more compact typographical style. Displacement consists in placing the translated text into other bigger balloons which are drawn in the same panel. However, these strategies may sometimes show a distortion in translations, especially displacement because it ignores the roles of balloons shapes in message-creation. Some of the strategies mentioned above are also adopted by expert translators, even though many of them have been changed and made more professional.

Today the way Japanese comics used to be translated has changed and an increasingly high number of publishers have begun adopting new translation strategies which involve foreignization, since they have been influenced by non-professional translator's choices (Rampant, 2010: 229). When translating sound effects, the publishing house Tokyopop does not edit the original Japanese text on the page, yet it provides a translation in the margins. Similarly, non-professional translators replace sound effects with their English equivalent or occasionally leave them untranslated (Rampant, 2010: 227). Some publishers preserve honorifics and include a page where they are explained. Nowadays in translated manga the foreignization strategy is followed even for cultural items, and at the end of the manga publishers include translation notes which explain them in detail. The addition of a final page with definitions and explanations marks a huge difference between professional translations of Japanese comics and translations which are carried out by fan groups. Non-professional translators prefer using foot notes

and not to add lists with explanation at the end of the translation. They use many foot notes to convey explanations to readers in order to catch the original meanings (Delforouz *et al*., 2018: 96). On the contrary, professional translators tend to avoid foot notes to produce a product as fluid and readable as the original. Furthermore, Rampant (2010: 223) specifies that non-professional translators do not leave any explanation on how to read correctly their translations. By contrast, the official published Japanese comics have always contained a warning page where it is explained that the book has to be read backward.

To sum up, non-professional translators usually opt for techniques of foreignization, while professional translators prefer to domesticate Japanese comics (Rampant, 2010: 222). Professional translators are limited by their customer's will, whereas non-professional translators are not financially compensated for their work; therefore, their personal preference determines what they will translate and their translation choices (Delforouz *et al*., 2018: 94). Nevertheless, each fan translation group follows its own self-made rules in the translation of insults, swearwords and sexual contents e.g. the Iranian fan translation community has its own rules which forbid translating words which are politically, religiously, ethnically, or racially offensive, but this community tolerates all kinds of relationships among characters and all manga genres (Delforouz *et al.* 2018: 99)

Despite the various influences of non-professional translators' choices on professional translators' decisions, Rampant (2010: 230) suggests that nowadays it seems that publishers' attitude towards the domestication of cultural elements has not completely changed, since adaptation is still one of the most common translation strategies in manga which are translated into English. In a professional context a literal translation from Japanese is provided, then a specialist in scriptwriting adapts the dialogue to make it sound more like an American comic (Rampant, 2010: 231). Although fans begun translating their favourite Japanese comics because the official translations were highly domesticated, American manga readers like professional translators' translations as the high figures of translated manga sales in America demonstrate or they would not buy officially translated manga. A successful translation is the one that the audience wants and often the success of a translated comic depends on publishers' decisions, since comic books are strictly related to culture (Rampant, 2010: 231; Rota, 2014: 84).

Chapter three

Translation analysis

3.1 Introduction

The techniques involved in designing a comic include linguistic elements, such as text in speech bubbles, typographic elements, and pictorial representations of peoples, objects, and situations. Its analysis cannot be clearly assigned to any specific academic discipline (Kaindl, 2004: 173). Comics are literary texts because speech bubbles contain characters' words, i.e. dialogues, and captions may contain pieces of information about time and place, but their visual components make them multimodal ones. The blending and the collaboration between the visual and the verbal components are essential to grasp the whole of the meaning. Therefore, the analysis of comics has to consider both its verbal and the visual elements. This chapter investigates the Italian translation of *Death Note Special One-Shot*, which was done indirectly from the English version by an online group of non-professional translators.

Comics translation may be challenging due to the strict relationship between the visual and the verbal components, especially when they convey humour or include cultural references. In addition to the challenging aspects specific of comics translation, translators face other types of problems related to translation. The categories and the studies outlined in Chapter two will be adopted to carry out the analysis of the challenging aspects concerning comics translation and some of Mossop's revision parameters (2020: 136-157) will be used to identify the difficulties and problems that can be found in the Italian crowdsourced version and that are not specific of comics translation.

3.2 General aspects

Genre is relevant in translation because it evokes certain expectations and influences reading strategies (Kaindl, 2018: 244). *Death Note* can be classified as a *shōnen* because it is aimed at a 16-year-old public and deals with crime and violence. The words and terms used both in the original manga and in the one-shots are related to the semantic field of crime, e.g. police, detective, killer.

The specific medium through which a comic is presented influences both content and form (Kaindl, 2018: 244). In Europe the English version of the one-shot can be read online on the web site of the publishing house Shueisha and on its official app where the official Spanish translation is also available. The Italian crowdsourced version is available online and can be downloaded as a pdf file. In both the English and the Italian translations, the Japanese reading orientation is kept, i.e. the order in which the panels should be read is from right to left. Following the right reading orientation is essential to understand the correct sequences of the drawings and of the elements that contain the verbal components.

3.3 The elements of the linguistic paratext which are translated

Various translation strategies can be adopted in the translation of the elements of the linguistic paratext. When these elements are not important for the understanding or are considered irrelevant, they are usually left untranslated (Celotti, 2014: 40).

In the English translation all the linguistic elements which are written in the picture such as the names of the buildings, inscriptions, and the screens of the mobile phones are in English. In the drawings the Japanese onomatopoeias, sound effects, and words that are extremely difficult to manipulate are kept, but an English equivalent is always provided. By contrast, in the Italian translation the verbal elements written in the images are seldom translated. The protagonist Minoru Tanaka wants to put up an international auction online to sell the murdering notebook, so he asks the death god Ryuk to write on a cue card some pieces of information about it (see Figure 3.1). The cue card will be shown during a TV programme of the Sakura TV, a Japanese TV station. This plan takes place every time Minoru wants to communicate anonymously and provide information about the auction. Hence, the messages written on the cue cards are relevant to the storyline and are translated in the English and Italian versions.

Figure 3.1. In the English translation the verbal messages of the linguistic paratext are always translated [Ohba, Obata, 2020: 34].

Figure 3.2. In the Italian translation the verbal message of the linguistic paratext is translated [Ohba, Obata, 2020: 34].

In this picture Ryuk is not drawn because he is not visible to the people who have not touched the death note. The power to remotely kill people as used by Kira can be achieved by writing their name on the death note, therefore, to have it one must own the murdering notebook. By changing the position of the sentence "if you want to buy it" in the Italian translation, the Italian text conveys a slightly different meaning. It seems that Ryuk with the cue card is warning people that the power of Kira is put up for auction if they want it, and to use Twitter to indicate the bid amount, but the meaning of the English text is that people interested in it should use the social network to try to win the auction.

In the Italian translation the words written in the pictures — and not in the speech bubbles or in the captions — are usually kept in Japanese, but there are two exceptions. The protagonist name tag is written in Roman alphabet and the sign "faculty room" is translated in Italian as *aula docenti*. During the first flashback Minoru's teachers are talking about his marks in the faculty room. It is possible to learn that they are in this room because it is clearly depicted and the sign "faculty room" is drawn.

3.3.1 The elements of the linguistic paratext left untranslated

In the Italian translation the verbal components of the linguistic paratext are left in Japanese, even though they may be useful to understand the context. The most outstanding examples are the main character's English exam and I.Q. test, the words displayed on the screen of a student's mobile phone, all the onomatopoeias that are written in Japanese in the pictures, the name of the building of the TV station, the name of the bank, the words on the TV screens of the buildings, and a bank account.

International governments such as the American and the Chinese are interested in buying the death note in the auction, so they indicate their bid amount on Twitter (see

Figure 3.3). The next day Minoru's classmates check a Twitter page to see the new bids and a student shouts that a bid has passed the quadrillion yen mark.

Figure 3.3. In the English translation the verbal messages of the linguistic paratext are always translated [Ohba, Obata, 2020: 62].

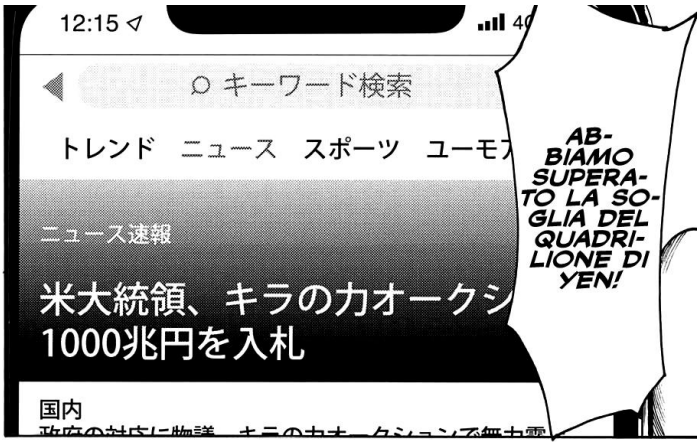


Figure 3.4. In the Italian translation the verbal message of the linguistic paratext is kept in Japanese [Ohba, Obata, 2020: 64].

The drawing shows the screen of a mobile phone. It displays a Twitter page which contains an important piece of information, i.e. the US President bids one quadrillion yen mark in the auction. However, an Italian reader who does not know Japanese cannot grasp this important piece of information included in the picture because the words are not translated (see Figure 3.4).

Finally, it is possible to affirm that the English text worked just as a source for the text and the Japanese one was used to put in the Italian translation. Manipulating the drawings of a comic is complicated, quite expensive, and requires technical skills and time. This may explain why not all the verbal elements that can be found in the linguistic paratext are translated in the Italian translation, which was done by a group of people who translate for free.

3.4 The translation of sound effects

Sound effects are relevant features in comics because they reinforce the meaning conveyed by the images or add a new one. They can be written in the drawings — in these cases they are usually left untranslated — or can be found in speech bubbles. Many types of sounds exist and people perceive them differently, so they are difficult to classify. However, identifying the sounds — according to the studies of Liberman (2004), Igareda (2017), and Valero Garcès (1996) which were investigated in chapter two — can be useful to see how they are rendered in the Italian crowdsourced translation.

3.4.1 The sound effects rendered in the Italian translation

Ryuk goes in Minoru's room and scares him, but when Minoru recognises the death god he sighs 'phew' (see Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5. An example of an English interjection written in a speech bubble [Ohba, Obata, 2020: 7].

Figure 3.6. The interjection is adapted to the Italian graphical conventions [Ohba, Obata, 2020: 7].

It is a sigh of relief, according to *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 96). The interjection is adapted to the Italian graphical conventions and becomes *fiuu* and it is in line with the drawing.

The interjections which are not left untranslated are 'hey', 'uh', 'hmm', 'whoa', 'yum' and 'cheers'. Ryuk and Minoru are talking about the murdering notebook and the serial killer, Kira, but the main protagonist is talking loudly, so the death god calls Minoru's attention saying "Hey… you're shouting" to warn him that other people may hear his words. When characters are confused or surprised, they often use 'huh', e.g. it is uttered by Ryuk when he surprisingly learns that some people consider the first human

possessor of a death note, Light Yagami, a god. ‘Uh’ is the sound used when a character hesitates, e.g. Ruyk is too close to Minoru’s face and the boy asks him “Uh…could you…”, he does not complete his sentence, but his meaning is clear: he wants the *shinigami* to get away from him. According to the *Merriam Webster Online Dictionary*, ‘hey’ is used to attract attention and ‘uh’ is chiefly American and expresses hesitation, ‘huh’ can signify surprise, disbelief, or confusion. In the Italian translation their equivalents are *ehi*, *ehm* and *eh*. In the *Vocabolario Treccani Online*, *ehi* is described as a device to attract someone’s attention, *ehm* to express hesitation, *eh* to express surprise and disbelief. ‘Hmm’ is an interjection and a humming sound that identifies a thought process in progress as explained in *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 68). It is the sound that Minoru produces when he thinks about his plan on how to use the death note without murdering anyone. *Mmh* is the interjection adopted in the Italian translation. According to the *Vocabolario Treccani Online*, it can be used to convey perplexity. *The Oxford English Dictionary* online states that ‘whoa’ is used to express that one is surprised, impressed, or interested. Students are impressed in learning that a bid amount reached over 20 trillion yen and a student says that in his opinion the death note is worth 100 trillion yen because a government can become an internationally dominant power thanks to it. Another student shouts ‘whoa’ because he is amazed at his colleague’s opinion. In the Italian translation *wow* is the equivalent of ‘whoa’. According to the *Vocabolario Treccani Online*, *wow* is an interjection — commonly used in comics and TV series for teenagers — which can express satisfaction, excitement, or amazement. Therefore, the Italian equivalents of ‘hey’, ‘uh’, ‘hmm’, ‘whoa’ are suitable to the context and the correspondence between pictures and words is kept.

After eating his apple, the death god Ryuk is happy and says that he enjoys the taste of apples (see Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7. Another example of an English interjection written in a speech bubble [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 3].

Figure 3.8. The English interjection is rendered with an Italian adjective. The second speech bubble is not translated literally, but the correspondence between the drawing and the text is kept [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 3].

Ryuk says 'yum' and adds that apples are good. According to *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 160), 'yum' "is an eating sound". It is rendered in Italian with the adjective *buona* (literally 'good') (see Figure 3.8). In the second speech bubble the death god says that apples are good, but the Italian translation differs from the English because it runs "*Le mele sono così…* ***succose***" (literally 'apples are so juicy'). *Mele succose* is an Italian collocation which means that the apples are good because they contain a lot of juice. In comics translation the goal is to keep the correspondence between the visual and the verbal component, and pictorial elements often have primacy over verbal messages (Zanettin, 2009: 39; Celotti, 2014: 34). In this specific case, the image depicts Ryuk's mouth shedding a mixture of apple juice and saliva, so the Italian translation of the second speech bubble is in line with it.

People are happy because they received a huge amount of money and managed to buy new cars, houses, and apartments in cash. They happily celebrate and make a toast to Kira, i.e. Minoru's alter ego, and shout 'Cheers!'.

Figure 3.9. Another example of an English interjection written in a speech bubble [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 85].

Figure 3.10. The English interjection is rendered with an Italian one [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 85].

According to the *Merriam Webster Online Dictionary*, the interjection is used as a toast. The Italian cultural equivalent adopted in the Italian translation is *alla salute*. As is written in the *Vocabolario Treccani Online*, the Italian common cultural equivalents *cincin* and *alla salute* are uttered during a toast. In the picture, people are not depicted, but in the speech bubble is written that they are doing a toast, so the Italian translation is suitable to the context.

3.4.2 The sound effects left untranslated

This comic contains several Japanese onomatopoeias which are nicely drawn in the pictures. In the English translation they are kept, but their equivalents are added in the drawings. By contrast, in the Italian crowdsourced translation the drawings are not modified and the Japanese onomatopoeias are kept without providing any equivalents.

The god of death Ryuk loves apples and in a few panels, he is depicted chewing or biting one.

Figure 3.11. In the English translation Japanese sounds are kept, but English equivalents are added [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 2].

Figure 3.12. In the Italian translation Japanese sounds are kept without providing any equivalents [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 2].

In the English translation the noises Ryuk produces while chewing it are written near his mouth and their English equivalent ‘chomp’ is added near the Japanese onomatopoeia (see Figure 3.11). It is clear from the drawing that Ryuk is chomping an apple, but an Italian reader cannot read the Japanese sound because the Italian equivalent is not provided (see Figure 3.12).

Thanks to the English translation, it is possible to discover that many of the Japanese sounds and onomatopoeias in the comic are sounds made by humas, e.g. ‘ha-ha-ha’ students laughing, sounds not made by humans, e.g. ‘boom’ an explosion, sounds made by the interaction between a human being and an object, e.g. ‘clunk’ the sound that Minoru makes when he falls down from the swing and hits the ground. Since in the Italian translation they are left in Japanese, an Italian reader cannot read them.

In the English translation there are three sounds that are made by the interaction between a human being and an object that are written in the speech bubbles, but they are omitted in the Italian translation and their speech bubbles are completely white. One sound is ‘tap’ that is a tapping sound as explained in *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 136). It is made by the people who are typing on the calculator of their phone to calculate the amount of money they will get because the money from the winning bid, i.e. a quadrillion yen, will be split up among the people who have a Yotsuba bank of Japan savings account and registered residence in Tokyo aged sixty and under. The second is ‘pop’ and is made by the detective’s hand and the replica of the death god he is making. He is one of the few people who can see and recognise Ryuk. Therefore, he makes a replica of Ryuk to create a facial recognition

system able to identify the death god for the purposes of the investigations. According to *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 101), 'pop' can be a hitting sound. In this case the detective is putting a plastic eye into the puppet's face. The third is 'click'. This sound is usually produced when pressing a button as written in *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 37). It is made by the detective clicking a button of the keyboard.

During the second flashback that depicts the day in which Ryuk and Minoru met for the first time, the death god throws the murdering notebook against the young student's head. This hurts Minoru who is shocked and cries 'ow' and 'aah'. In addition, the main protagonist shouts when he sees the scary death god for the first time and falls from the swing (see Figure 3.13).

Figure 3.13. The cry of terror [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 11].

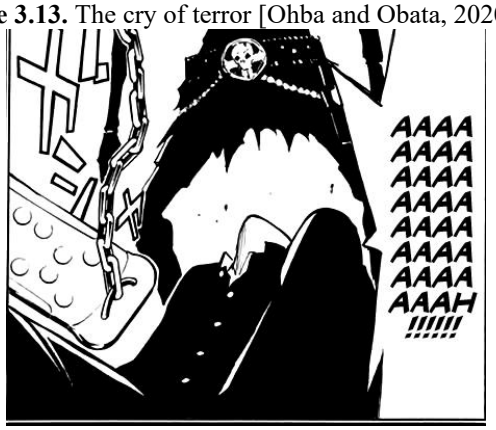


Figure 3.14. The cry of terror is made longer in the Italian translation [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 11].

Minoru's cry of terror 'aaaah' is made longer in the Italian translation and the size of the letters is smaller (see Figure 3.14). Adding letters to make the sound longer is quite common in comics, and typographical modification is often adopted by fan translation groups (Valero Garcés, 1996: 229; Delforouz *et al.*, 2018: 103).

According to *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 94), 'ow' is a cry of pain. The *Merriam Webster Online Dictionary* states that 'aah' is used to exclaim amazement, joy, or surprise. The *Vocabolario Treccani Online* writes that *ahi* is used to express a strong and sudden physical pain and *oh* can express various feelings including surprise. Therefore, the Italian equivalents for 'ow' and 'aah' can be *ahi* and *oh*, but in the Italian translation these sounds are kept in English.

Other human sounds which express attitudes or feelings written in the speech bubbles of the English translation and that are not rendered in Italian are 'oooh', 'oh', 'aww', and 'tch'. Ryuk exclaims happily 'oooh' when Minoru gives him an apple, and he says 'aww' at the end of the one-shot when Minoru is dead. There are many instances of 'oh', e.g. the main protagonist says 'oh' when the death god draws his attention and asks him a question. According to *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 95), 'oooh' is an exclamation of enjoyment, surprise, excitement, pleasure etc. The *Merriam Webster Online Dictionary* states that 'aw' is an interjection used to express mild disappointment and that the interjection 'oh' can be used to express different emotions, acknowledgment or understanding of a statement, to address people, to introduce an example or an approximation. A possible Italian equivalent of these sounds can be 'oh'. *The Oxford English Dictionary* online explains that 'tch' represents the dental click used to express vexation. It is uttered by the death god Midora when Ryuk rudely asks her if she has brought him an apple.

In the Italian translation the sound that is not produced by humans is kept in English. The sound is 'Dun-da Dun Dun Da-da Da-da' the music Minoru is listening to on his mobile phone.

The king of the shinigami reproaches Ryuk for having let Minoru sell the death note in the human world. In order to prevent people from selling the murdering notebook the *shinigami* king adds a new rule that states that a human who buys or sells it will die. Since Minoru was the owner of Ryuk's death note, the death god has no choice but to kill him by writing his name on it. When Minoru receives the money, he suddenly dies of a heart attack and his body lays on the ground of the bank. The sound that Minoru's last heartbeat makes is 'thump' and it is written in white in a black speech bubble and in the Italian translation it is left in English.

According to *KA-BOOM! A Dictionary of Comic Book Words, Symbols & Onomatopoeia* (2018: 140), 'thump' is a sound that can convey different meanings, including a sound of a heartbeat. For the *Vocabolario Treccani Online*, *toc* is an onomatopoeia which can refer to a heartbeat, hence it can be used as an equivalent of 'thump'.

3.5 The translation of humour

This manga deals with crime, criminals, and the sale of a weapon, i.e. the murdering notebook, so it is not meant to be funny. However, a joke can be found. Kaindl's (2004) categories are adopted to analyse humour. Minoru's teachers are amazed by the protagonist's excellent result in the I.Q. test, but they complain about the poor marks he gets in school exams. Meanwhile Minoru is looking at his English exam, sitting alone in a swing of a park.

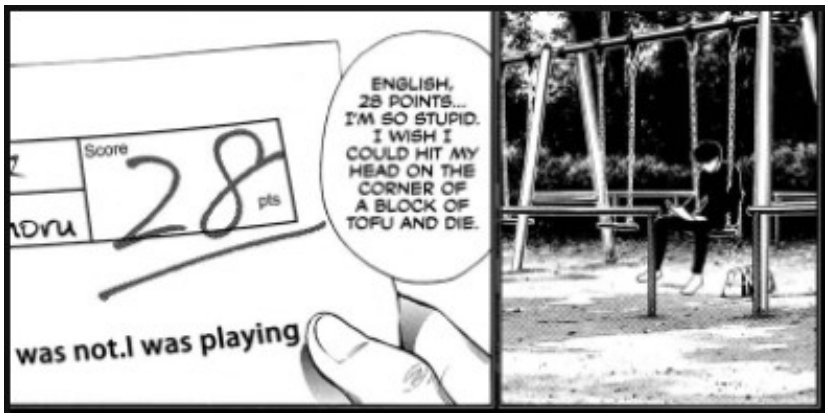


Figure 3.15. The translation of humour [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 9].

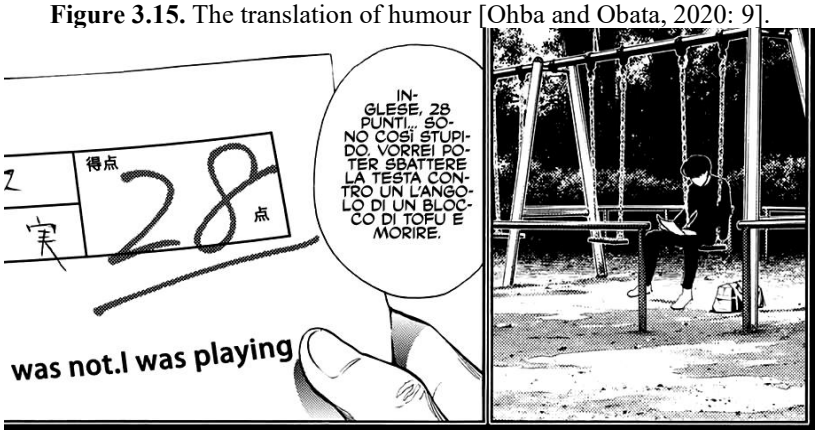


Figure 3.16. The translation of humour [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 9].

He scored 28 out of 100 points and thinks "English, 28 points… I'm so stupid. I wish I could hit my head on the corner of a block of tofu and die." This sentence is humorous because it is impossible to die by hitting the head against something as soft as tofu (see

Figure 3.15). According to Hiroko Yoda and Matt Alt (2012), there is a Japanese proverb about tofu that is also used as an insult. In this specific case it is used to reinforce the idea that Minoru is not so smart.

The joke is based mainly on the verbal elements because the drawings do not convey any humorous effect, hence, humour is monomodal. The Italian translation is literal, and the drawing is not modified (see Figure 3.16). The sentence *Sono così stupido* (literally 'I'm so stupid') is not idiomatic. As a matter of fact, an Italian student will probably say *Sono proprio stupido* which conveys the same meaning, but it sounds more Italian. According to Mossop's classification (2020: 136), this can be classified as a problem of language and style, in particular an idiom issue.

Monomodal humour and humorous technique are kept. In both the English and the Italian texts Minoru says an absurdity: hitting one's head against a corner of a block of tofu is not harmful neither painful because it is not a hard object. Although it is possible to identify an absurdity, the joke is a bit strange. Humour is strictly interwoven with culture, therefore, it would be interesting to read the original Japanese text and discover the connection between the joking way to speak of death and the cultural reference as tofu is a traditional Asian food made from soya beans. The original meaning of the joke cannot be completely retrieved from the English text, so it is tricky to translate without reading the Japanese source text. This is an issue that concerns relay translation since the Italian translation is based on the English one.

3.6 The translation of cultural-specific items and of cultural references

Comics are linked to culture and, as a matter of fact, comics translation is firstly a translation into another visual culture (Zanettin, 2014: 12). The cultural-specific items and cultural references can be found both in the visual and in the verbal components. Translating them can be particularly challenging because the drawings may constitute a constraint and it may require the translator's creativity. Aixelá's (1996: 60-64) translation procedures are used to analyse how cultural elements are translated.

Shinigami is a Japanese word that "translates 'death gods' and can be compared to the Western figure of the Grim Reaper" (Hanna, 2015). Its depiction is unusual and the term itself is uncommon for western readers. It is written throughout the English version of the comic book series distributed by Viz Media, official partner of Shueisha, so the English-speaking fans of the original series know exactly what it means (see Figure 3.17).

Figure 3.17. Translation of a cultural reference: *shinigami* is kept [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 1].

Figure 3.18. Translation of a cultural reference: *shinigami* is translated [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 5].

In the official Italian translation of the manga series the Japanese term is not used (see Figure 3.18), instead its Italian translation is adopted, i.e. *dei della morte* (literally 'gods of death'). However, the term *shinigami* can be found in the Italian version of the anime series that is adapted from the comic book. The Italian audience is familiar with this term and this may explain why it is kept in the Italian crowdsourced translation of the one-shot. Furthermore, in the English translation of the one-shot Ryuk is referred to as 'death god' and *shinigami* (see Figure 3.19), so a person who reads the Japanese term for the first time can understand what Ryuk is.

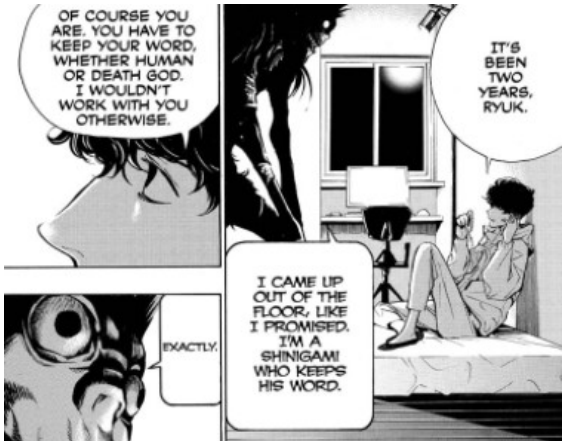


Figure 3.19. The cultural reference: *shinigami* [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 7].

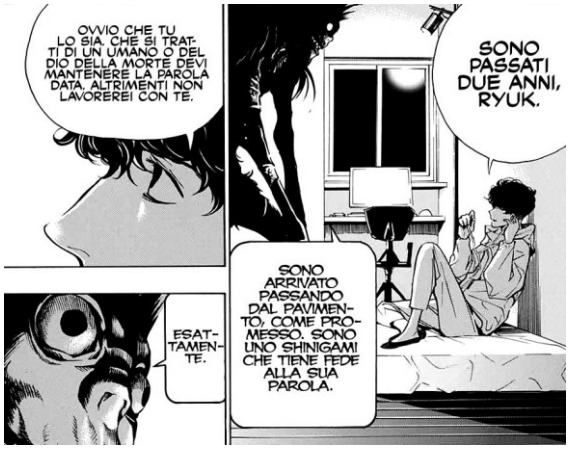


Figure 3.20. The cultural reference: *shinigami* [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 7].

Minoru meets Ryuk for the first time two years later and the death god immediately assures him that he came up out of the floor as promised. So, Minoru confirms that he knows that Ryuk is a death god who keeps his word, otherwise, he would not work with him. In the first panel Ryuk defines himself as a *shinigami* (see Figure 3.20), in the second one Minoru refers to him as a death god. In the Italian translation the same strategy is adopted: first the Japanese term is used, then the Italian translation of the English equivalent 'death god', i.e. *dio della morte*.

According to Mossop's (2020: 136) revision parameters, in the Italian text two translation problems related to language and style can be identified. The first is due to the English interference because the Italian sentence "*Sono arrivato passando dal pavimento*" reflects the English one and is awkwardly structured. Since Ryuk can pass through walls and floors and in the previous page he is depicted coming up out of the floor of Minoru's room, a solution can be "*Sono entrato dal pavimento*". The other issue is a grammatical mistake because the definite article *del* is used instead of the indefinite

article *un*. This mistake leads to a misunderstanding of the text as the prepositional phrase *del dio della morte* refers to a specific death god, but many *shinigami* exist in the fictional world depicted by the author.

Each country has its own education system and mark system, therefore, they constitute a challenge for translators. In the English translation Minoru is referred to as a student who does not put any efforts into his grades. Ryuk and Minoru are talking about Kira, the death god is surprised that the main protagonist is well informed about it. The young boy explains that children study Kira and his crimes at school (see Figure 3.21).

Figure 3.21. Translation of a cultural reference: the education system [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 16].

Figure 3.22. Translation of a cultural reference: the education system [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 16].

It sounds a little strange that a child has an ethics textbook and studies ethics and world history at elementary school. This may be invented by the author and the Japanese source text should be read to discover it.

The U.S.A., UK, Italian and Japanese education systems differ, the grades and structure of primary and secondary schools change according to each country. The Japanese education system is divided into primary school (s*hogakkou),* lower secondary school *(chugakkou),* and upper secondary school *(koutougakkou)* (Sen *et al*., 2005: 77). Similarly, the Italian education system is divided into primary school (*scuola elementare*, i.e. elementary school), lower secondary school (*scuola media*, i.e. middle school) upper secondary school (Sen *et al*., 2005: 75). The UK education system — excluding

Scotland's one — is divided into primary school (junior and infant school), lower and upper secondary schools (secondary modern, comprehensive school, grammar school, further education sector colleges, school sixth form) (Sen *et al*., 2005: 81). The education system in the US includes primary school (elementary school), lower (junior high school, middle school) and upper secondary school (high school, senior high school) (Sen *et al*., 2005: 85). Hence, there are no elementary schools and middle school in UK, but they can be found in the United States.

Bearing in mind that the Italian translation is a relay one, — and so the cultural references to the Japanese education system are lost —, it is possible to maintain that it is appropriate to the context, and *(scuole) medie* and (*scuole) elementari* are instances of naturalization (Aixelá, 1996: 63) because they are specific schools of the Italian education system (see Figure 3.22) The words 'schools' are omitted in the Italian translation as they are implicit in the context.

Another issue related to education is Minoru's mark in his English text because each country follows its own mark system. In the English translation it is written that he scored 28 points, but it is not specified that in Japan marks go from zero to one hundred. Consequently, it is not specified in the Italian translation either. A reader must google it to get this piece of information.

This Japanese comic deals with the sale of the death note, and the main governments that are involved in the auction are the United States of America, the Republic of China and Japan. Therefore, the currencies that are adopted are the American dollar and the Japanese yen. In the Italian translation they are not converted into euros, thus keeping the storyline and preserving the cultural reference.

Other cultural references which can be found in this one-shot are the Oval Office and the White House, and the Japanese word *Reiwa*. Minoru manages to sell the death note to the President of the United States and Ryuk is designated to bring him the weapon. The death god goes to the Oval Office in the White House to give the murdering notebook to the President. In the Italian translation 'Oval Office' is rendered as *Studio Ovale* and 'White House' as Casa Bianca. The *Enciclopedia Treccani Online* states that *Casa Bianca* is the official residence, located in Washington, of the President of the United States, so the Italian translation is correct just as *Studio Ovale* is the right Italian equivalent used to refer to the Oval Office.

One month after the sale of the murdering notebook, the Japanese economy booms, especially around Tokyo. People are happy because they received the money from the winning bid, which was split up after the auction, and celebrate Kira, i.e. Minoru Tanaka. They call this boom the Reiwa Bubble or the Kira Bubble. The author played with a cultural reference to Japan's new imperial period, called *Reiwa* period, which began on May 1st 2019, following the crowning of the new emperor of Japan, Hironomiya Naruhito. As a matter of fact, the one shot is set in May and June 2019. According to the *Treccani Enciclopedia Online* and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, *Reiwa* is the period's reign name and the two ideograms, or kanji, which constitute it are *rei* (literally 'order' or 'auspicious') and *wa* (literally 'harmony'). Its official English translation is 'Beautiful Harmony'. The Japanese term referring to the period's reign name is kept in both the English and the Italian translation.

3.7 Proper nouns

In the English translation proper nouns and the names of the TV station and of the bank are transliterated from the Japanese and adapted to the English graphical conventions. Similarly, in the Italian official version of the comic book series they are transliterated according to the Italian graphical conventions. The main characters of this one-shot appear also in the original manga series, excluding the protagonist Minoru Tanaka, and in the Italian crowdsourced translation their names are the same that are adopted in the English version. The table 3.1 with the characters' names written in the English translation of the one-shot, the Italian crowdsourced one, and the Italian official version is provided in order to identify the differences among these versions. The final volume of the manga series *Death Note. Guida alla lettura. Vol. 13* contains a list with the characters' full names which are provided in the table. In the English and in the Italian translation of the one-shot the only names and surnames provided are the policeman Touta Madsuda's and the main character's one.

English translation of the one-shot	**Italian translation of the one-shot**	**Italian official translation of the comic book**
Ryuk (death god)	Ryuk	Ryuk
Light Yagami (previous Kira)	Light Yagami	Light Yagami
Kira (nickname of the serial killer)/ A-Kira (name adopted	Kira/ A-Kira	Kira

by L to identify the new Kira, i.e Minoru Tanaka)		
L (detective)	L	L- Elle
Aizawa (deputy director)	Aizawa	Shuichi Aizawa
Touta Matsuda (policeman)	Touta Matsuda	Tota Matsuda
Rester (SPK's second-in-command and operation leader)	Rester	Anthony Rester
Armonia Justin (death god)	Armonia Justin (death god)	Armonia Jastin Beyondllemason

Table 3.1 This table shows how the character's names are written in the English and the Italian translations of the one-shot and in the Italian official translation of the original comic book series.

Most of the names of the Italian official version match perfectly with the ones in the English version, e.g. Ryuk, is the same in the three versions. The differences among the proper names in the English translation of the one-shot and in the Italian unofficial and official translations are due to the different conventions adopted when transcribing from Japanese, i.e. Touta Matsuda/Tota Matsuda and Amonia Justin/Armonia Jastin. According to Aixelá (1996: 59), proper names can be conventional or loaded ones, but in this specific case it is impossible to determine whether they are conventional or loaded ones because they are transcribed from the Japanese.

Two names need to be explained and contextualised: Kira and L. Kira is the name by which the first serial killer, i.e. Light Yagami, is known by the people, the policemen and the detective. As is explained by the main protagonist of the original manga series (see Figure 3.23), it comes from the English word killer and for this reason it is linguistically interesting.

Figure 3.23. The nickname Kira comes from the English word killer [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 13].

The one-shot is set after the defeat of the first Kira, and Minoru Tanaka becomes the second Kira. Therefore, detective L decides to name him A-Kira. The way in which the detective's name is written throughout the official Italian version of the manga has to be clarified. The detective uses the letter L as a nickname to hide his real identity, but in the official Italian translation it is spelled as it is pronounced in Italian, i.e. Elle.

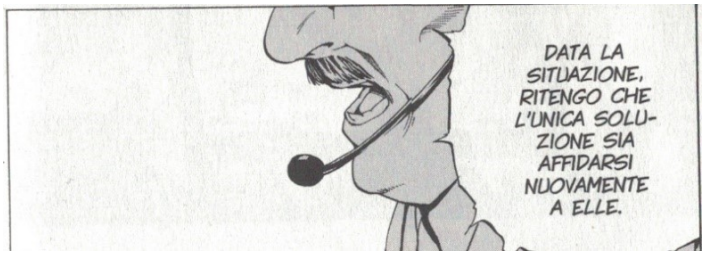


Figure 3.24[1]**.** In the official Italian translation the detective's nickname is spelled as it is pronounced in Italian, i.e. Elle [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 56].

In the first volume of *Death Note* the Interpol needs help to catch Kira, so in a meeting they decide to rely on the detective L to solve this complex case. Figure 3.24 shows that in the official Italian translation, which is done directly from the Japanese, L is spelled as Elle. By contrast, in the English translations of the original manga series and the one-shot the detective's name is written with the capital letter L (see Figures 3.25 and 3.26).

Figure 3.25. The detective's name is written with the capital letter L [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 42].

[1] The original English translation of the same speech bubble writes "I think we have no choice. This is another one for L".

Figure 3.26. The detective's name is written with the capital letter L [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 42].

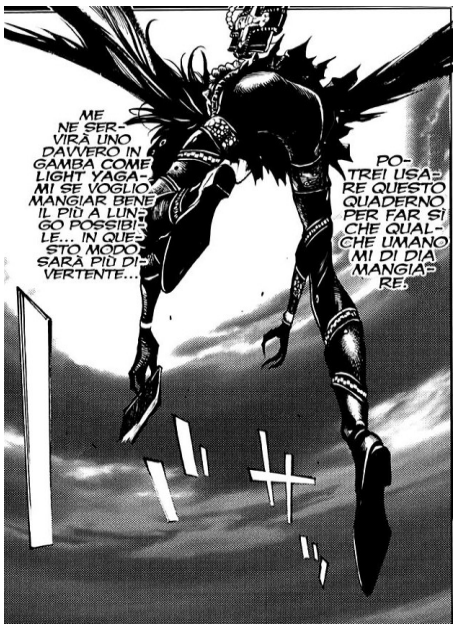
Figures 3.25 and 3.26 are taken from the one-shot and depicts the SPK's second-in-command and operation leader, Mr Rester, warning L that there is some news about Kira. As it is possible to see, in the Italian translation the detective's nickname is written as a capital letter as in the English one. This one-shot is intended for the fans of the original manga series, hence, they know that the detective's nickname is the letter L of the Roman alphabet.

It is important to highlight that the Italian crowdsourced translation is a relay translation and that the English one worked as a source text, so the names of the English text are kept in the Italian one. Although the names of the English official translation do not differ substantially from the Italian official ones, it would have been more accurate to adopt the official Italian versions of the names in the Italian crowdsourced translation. However, Minoru Tanaka is a new character and the official Italian translation of this one-shot has not been released yet. As an official Italian version of this one-shot has not come out, the protagonist's name is the same in the English translation and in the Italian crowdsourced one. It is not difficult to pronounce and to decipher visually for an Italian reader and it sounds Japanese, hence, keeping it as it is transliterated in English can be a good solution.

3.8 Other translation problems

This section analyses the translation problems that are not specific of comics translation. Mossop's (2020: 136-157) classification of translation problems and revision parameters are adopted to study the most outstanding examples of problems and difficulties that can be found in the Italian crowdsourced translation.

In the Italian translation there are a few typographical errors. Misspellings and typos are distracting because they slow down the reading process (Mossop, 2020: 32).



Figure[2] 3.27. This figure shows that there are two typographical mistakes in the Italian crowdsourced translation [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 2].

Ryuk is flying into the human world in order to exchange the notebook with human food, i.e. apples. In the Italian translation, the sentence "*Potrei usare questo quaderno per far sì che qualche umano mi di dia mangiare**" two words are misspelled (*di dia*) (see Figure 3.27) as the correct form would be *mi dia da.* These are mechanical issues.

As regards language and style, in the Italian translation some idiomatic issues can be found. They are due to the English interference or the use of wrong Italian collocations or inappropriate word choice. "Interferences are projections of unwanted features" (Hansen, 2010: 385) from the source language to the target language which occur because of a wrong assumption of symmetry which may appear between the two languages or cultures.

Minoru is formulating his brilliant plan to sell the death note during the Sakura TV programme. Since the human owner of a death note must be possessed by a death god, the young boy asks Ryuk how far he can actually get from him. However, there is no set distance, so Minoru asks the death god to come up with a number.

[2] The English text writes "I could use this notebook to get some human to feed me again"/"I'll need a real capable one like Light Yagami if I want to eat well for as long as possible… and it'll be more entertaining that way…"https://mangaplus.shueisha.co.jp/viewer/1006371

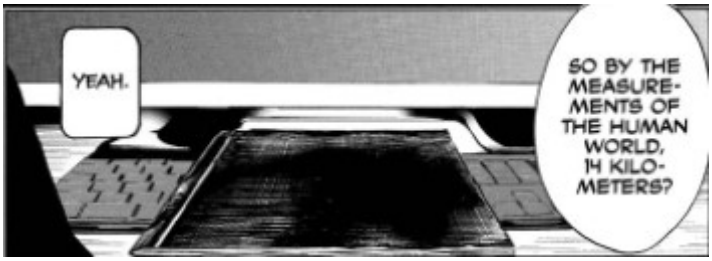


Figure 3.28. This figure shows that in the source text the word measurement is written [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 28].

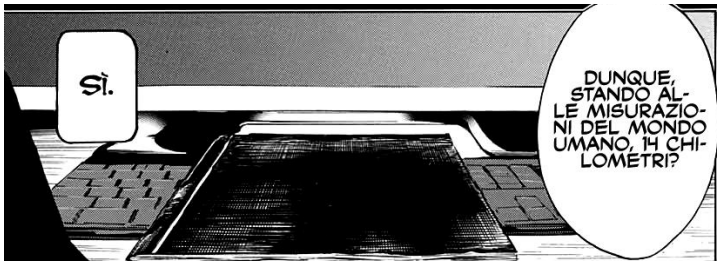


Figure 3.29. This figure shows that in the Italian translation there is a difficulty due to interference [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 28].

By the measurements of the human world, the distance is 14 Km (see Figure 3.28). The world measurements is translated as *misurazioni*, but the Italian word is not suitable to the context (see Figure 3.29). According to the *Vocabolario Treccani Online*, *misurazione* is the act or process of taking or making a measurement, and *le unità di misura* (literally 'units of measurement') refers to physical quantities. Therefore, *unità di misura* can be an equivalent of measurements in this context.

The second in command an operation leader of the SPK Mr Rester calls the policeman Matsuda and the deputy director Aizawa. Mr Aizawa replies and greets Mr Rester (see Figure 3.30).

Figure 3.30. Mr Aizawa replies and greets Mr Rester [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 48].

Figure 3.31. The figure shows that there is an issue to do with logic in the Italian translation [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 50].

In the Italian translation an issue to do with logic can be found (see Figure 3.31). The deputy director addresses Mr Rester with the Italian *tu* — which is the informal equivalent for 'you' — when he says *"è bello parlare con te"*, but then he changes the level of formality and addresses him as *Signor Rester* (literally 'Mr Rester'). In the Italian speech bubble the abbreviation SPK is omitted; it stands for Special Provision for Kira, i.e. a group of FBI and CIA members investigating on the Kira case. However, it is not an unwarranted omission because this translation is aimed at fans of the original manga series who know that the Japanese police and the SPK members worked together.

In the Italian translation a few problems of meaning transfer can be found, they are issues of accuracy and completeness. Accuracy is a qualitative matter: the translator's primary task is to guarantee that the message of the source text is (more or less) the same of the target text (Mossop, 2020: 141-142). Completeness is a quantitative matter: translators should follow the No Additions, No Subtractions (NANS) principle which applies only to relevant meaning (Mossop, 2020: 142).

Minoru's classmates are checking the bids and discover that one has reached 300 billion dollars.

Figure 3.32. Minoru's classmates discover that a bid has reached 300 billion dollars [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 56].

Figure 3.33. This figure shows that there is an issue of accuracy in the Italian translation: the bid is 300 billion dollars and not 300 million dollars [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 58].

The students are amazed because the bid amount is very high. However, it is not the same in the two texts, in the English text it is higher than in the Italian one. There is an issue of accuracy in the Italian translation (see Figure 3.33) since the Italian equivalent of billion is not *milioni* (literally 'million') but *miliardi*.

The death god wants to give the death note to the young boy in order to have apples and asks him whether he can use it or not. Minoru explains Ryuk that nowadays in Japan security cameras are on every street corner and that every train cars, cars, and busses have dashcams, so it is more difficult to commit a crime without being noticed.

Figure 3.34. Minoru explains Ryuk that nowadays in Japan every train cars, cars, and busses have dashcams [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 22].

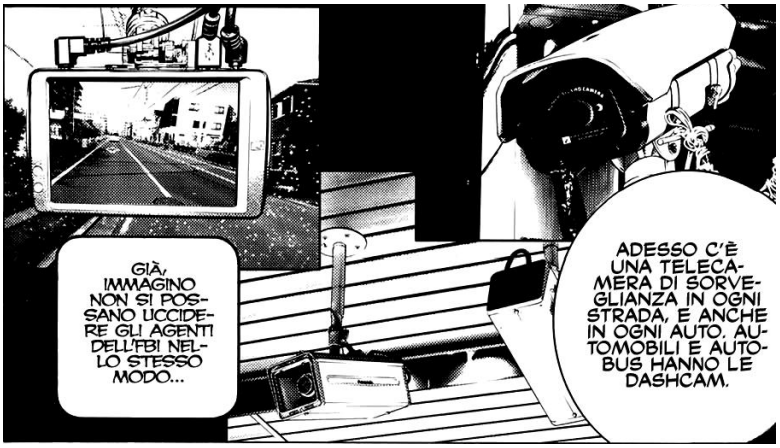


Figure 3.35. The word dashcam is left in English [Ohba and Obata, 2020: 22].

In the Italian translation the word *dashcam* is left in English, resulting in an issue of completeness. The Italian audience is not familiar with this English word, therefore, it is better to adopt its Italian equivalent. It can be *piccole telecamere da cruscotto,* as written in the Picchi's (online bilingual dictionary) Grande Dizionario di Inglese. However, a dashcam is depicted in the drawing, so an Italian reader can see it and understand what it is.

As regards translation quality, accuracy is the most important implied need in translation (Mossop, 2020: 7). This translation fulfils this important need because it conveys the meaning of the English source text, even though there are a few inaccuracies. Quality is not absolute: texts are meeting different needs, so different quality criteria may be adopted (Mossop, 2020: 6). When revising this translation, it is fundamental to bear in mind that it is done by an online group of non-professional translators and that it is a relay translation. Translating from a source text that is a translation is difficult because in the translated text necessary cultural adjustments may appear, but they may be unnecessary for another culture.

Achieving acceptable quality means satisfying clients and fulfilling the purpose of a translation (Mossop, 2020: 7-8). In this specific case there are no direct clients because the Italian translation is done for free and in order to supply the lack of an official Italian one. As a matter of fact, it will be deleted when the official Italian translation will be released. However, in this age marked by the development of the Web and crowdsourced translations the reader's satisfaction is an extension of the client satisfaction concept of quality (Mossop, 2020: 8). Nowadays readers can write their opinion on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter.

3.9 Conclusion to the analysis

Analysing a comic means studying its visual and verbal components, and how they collaborate to convey meaning. It is a complex task which cannot be assigned to a single academic discipline, but the purpose of this thesis was to investigate the Italian crowdsourced translation of *Death Note: Special One-Shot* which was released by the Japanese publishing house Shueisha on its website and application for smartphones. It is a relay translation because the original manga is in Japanese and this translation was done indirectly from the English translation. It is a complex procedure because it is not possible to understand all the pieces of information referring to the Japanese culture.

In this translation the elements of the linguistic paratext are often left untranslated. By keeping them untranslated, an Italian reader misses a few important pieces of information included the pictures, e.g. the American president bid. However, the words written in the speech bubbles provide the readers with enough pieces of information so that they can understand the context. Different translation strategies are adopted to render sounds and the several English conventionalized interjections, e.g. the Italian equivalents are sometimes provided, the interjections may be adapted to the Italian graphic conventions or left in English. Sound effects that are written in the drawings are kept in Japanese and no Italian equivalent is provided, so an Italian reader who does not know Japanese cannot read them. However, the drawings help the reader to catch the correct meaning. In the Italian translation the same humorous technique of the English one is kept in order to convey the humorous effect. The joke is extremely complex to render since this is a relay translation and the original cultural connotations and the humorous effect of the Japanese source text are lost. The translation of the culture-specific items and of the cultural references makes it clear that this is a relay translation because the cultural elements are related to the Japanese culture. The characters' names are written as in the English translation, even though the official Italian transliteration could have been followed. However, their English and Italian official versions are not substantially different. This and the drawings of the characters help the Italian reader to easily guess that the characters appear also in the original series. Keeping the proper names as they are transliterated in English may not bother the Italian readership as they are easy to read and decipher visually. Although some problems, difficulties, and a few inaccuracies can be found in the Italian translation, it conveys the meaning of the English source text. It is

important to bear in mind that this translation was carried out by a group of non-professional translators who did it for free and their purpose was to provide an Italian translation of the one-shot, which will not be available after the publication of the official Italian translation.

Finally, the original Japanese source text was not studied. It would have been interesting to compare the English translation and the Italian relay one with the original text in order to identify the differences. Further studies may focus on the use of slang, the typographic elements, and the comparison among the three translations.

Conclusions

The purpose of this thesis was to analyse an Italian crowdsourced translation of the English version of the Japanese one-shot *Death Note: Special One-Shot* originally written and drawn by Tsugumi Ohba and Takeshi Obata. Therefore, it is a relay translation. In addition to the translation analysis various topics were covered such as a brief overview on manga, comics translation, relay translation, and crowdsourcing. The studies of Zanettin (2014), Celotti (2014), Igareda (2017), Valero Garcés (2000), Ozumi (2009), Aixelá (1996), Kaindl (2004), and Mossop (2020) provided useful information on how translators do a translation of a comic and to carry out the analysis of the Italian translation in chapter three. The book *Manga. An Anthology of Global and Cultural Perspective* by Johnson-Woods (2010) gave detailed information on this specific type of comic, the differences between Japanese and western comics, and on the effect of this product on western countries, especially on the United States and the United Kingdom. In addition, Dollerup's (2000) study was fundamental for investigating indirect translation and O'Hagan's (2009) one offered a good starting point for carrying out an investigation on crowdsourcing.

Thanks to the studies analysed in Chapter one, especially Johnson-Woods's *An Anthology of Global and Cultural Perspective* it was possible to investigate manga structure and genres. These aspects are crucial for translators because they provide fundamental information on the target readership. The manga analysed follows the Asian reading orientation, therefore, it had to be read from right to left and is aimed at teenagers who are over 16 years old. In addition, its visual language is peculiar because there are a few visual elements which are highly related to Japanese visual culture, e.g. *shinigami.*

As regards crowdsourcing, O'Hagan (2009) affirms that it affects translation both as a product and as a profession. The way in which texts are delivered and read underwent a series of changes thanks to the development of Internet and of state-of-the-art technologies. Fan groups were among the first to use the Internet to create a workflow and to connect group members who live far from each other. In spite of the substantial changes to translators' profession, O'Hagan (2009) recommends that they take advantage of these changes and leverage them. Crowdsourcing has both positive and negative aspects, and Japanese publishing companies are also affected by it. On the one hand, some Japanese publishing companies are against online fan translation groups because

distributing manga online without author's and editors' permission is illegal; on the other hand, other companies support them as they may raise a demand for specific comics. The Italian translation analysed in chapter three is available online as a pdf file and was done by a group of non-professional translators for free. Japanese ideograms written in the drawings were left and no translations were provided because manipulating a comic is a time-spending and expensive activity. The Italian translation is not as smooth as a professional one and some mistakes can be found and Mossop's revision parameters were adopted to identify them.

Celotti (2014) affirms that comics mix both visual and verbal elements which are both needed to grasp meaning. Therefore, analysing the translation of a comic is challenging because of the collaboration and the blending between the drawings and the text. Translating a comic requires the translator's creativity, so that the text is in line with the images. An outstanding example was identified in the Italian crowdsourced translation, i.e. when Ryuk says that apples are good.

According to Dollerup's (2000) study, relay translation is a translation of a translated text, and the translation which works as a source text is intended for an actual audience. The Italian crowdsourced translation is an instance of relay translation. The English source text was translated for manga readers who are fans of the original comic book series *Death Note*, the Italian crowdsourced translation was intended for Italian readers to supply the lack of an official Italian version of the one-shot. When the official one will be released the Italian crowdsourced translation will be deleted. A few issues concerning Japanese culture, e.g. the joke, the Japanese education system and marks, affected the Italian translation. These problems were particularly challenging because the Japanese cultural references were lost in the English text.

To conclude, it is possible to say that the Italian translator adopted a foreignization perspective, e.g. some English interjections, all the Japanese sounds and onomatopoeias drawn in the comic, and proper names were left untranslated. Although a few inaccuracies can be found, the message conveyed by the Italian translator is the same as the English version. It is overall accurate, but it can be improved by correcting the mistakes and making it more idiomatic. The original Japanese version was not analysed. It would have been interesting to identify the differences among the original source text, the English translation, and the Italian one, in order to see how a translation from another translation

actually affects the referential quality and the pragmatic accuracy of the final translated text. In other words, how the English version affected the Italian translation and whether the meaning conveyed is exactly the same as the original Japanese source text or whether there are some differences due to linguistic or cultural reasons. Further investigations may analyse the differences in the use of typographic elements in comics translation or may focus on other crowdsourced translations of this one-shot or, more generally, of other works, which involve other languages, in order to provide more pieces of information on crowdsourcing and relay translation.

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Riassunto in italiano

L'obbiettivo di questa tesi è quello di proporre l'analisi di una traduzione italiana di un gruppo di traduttori non professionisti che si occupa di fumetti giapponesi e li distribuisce online. Il testo di partenza è a sua volta una traduzione, si tratta infatti della traduzione inglese del capitolo speciale autoconclusivo rilasciata gratuitamente nel febbraio 2020 dalla casa editrice giapponese Shueisha nel suo sito Manga Plus e che si aggiunge alla serie manga di fama mondiale *Death Note*, ideata da Tsgumi Ohba e illustrata da Takeshi Obata. Da questa serie manga sono stati tratti molti live-actions, spettacoli teatrali, film, oltre che la famosissima serie animata omonima composta da trentasette episodi che è stata, come il manga, tradotta in moltissime lingue.

Dato che il mio percorso di studi in "Lingue Moderne per la Comunicazione e la Cooperazione Internazionale" sta volgendo al termine, ho deciso di approfondire i mei studi sulla traduzione di un fumetto in ambito professionale, sulla traduzione indiretta e *crowdsourcing* ovvero un recente fenomeno online attinente alla traduzione e che ha delle ripercussioni sulla professione stessa del traduttore.

La presente tesi è strutturata in tre capitoli, ognuno dei quali è a sua volta suddiviso in diverse sezioni con relative sottosezioni. Il primo capitolo intitolato *Manga and its impact on western comics* (manga e il suo impatto nei paesi occidentali) analizza il manga come prodotto e il suo successo nei paesi occidentali, più precisamente negli Stati Uniti d'America, nel Regno Unito e in Italia. Questo primo capitolo è suddiviso in sei sezioni. La prima sezione è intitolata *Anime, manga and graphic novel* (anime, manga e la novella grafica) e ha l'intento di spiegare in breve questi tre prodotti perché spesso vengono confusi da chi si avvicina per la prima volta al vasto mercato dei fumetti e dei cortometraggi nipponici. Manga è un termine giapponese che può essere tradotto con fumetto, mentre anime può essere una serie animata o un film di animazione. Tuttavia, molto spesso gli anime sono tratti da serie manga e per questa ragione i due prodotti vengono spesso confusi. Secondo García (2015: 3), il *graphic novel* (la novella grafica) è un particolare tipo di fumetto che richiede una modalità di lettura diversa rispetto a quella dei fumetti. A questa definizione Zanettin (2014: 7) aggiunge che normalmente i *graphic novels* sono più lunghi rispetto ai fumetti.

Queste definizioni sono riduttive soprattutto quella di manga e per questa ragione nella seconda sezione di questo capitolo intitolata *What is manga?* (cos'è un manga) i

fumetti giapponesi vengono studiati più approfonditamente. In questa sezione sono dunque presentati e spiegati i vari generi di manga secondo la classificazione tratta dallo studio di Johnson-Woods (2010). I quattro generi manga più importanti sono *shōnen, shōjo, seinen e josei*, e ognuno di loro è destinato ad una specifica tipologia di lettori. Gli s*hōnen* sono manga destinati ad un pubblico adolescente maschile, la loro controparte è formata dai *shōjo* ovvero i manga per ragazze adolescenti, mentre gli *seinen* sono destinati ad un pubblico maschile adulto e i manga *josei* ad un pubblico femminile adulto. Dopo aver analizzato brevemente il manga come prodotto, la terza sezione intitolata *Differences between Japanese and western comics* (differenze tra i fumetti giapponesi e occidentali) evidenzia alcune tra le differenze fondamentali che si possono trovare tra i fumetti giapponesi e quelli occidentali. Una delle differenze più rilevanti è il fatto che i manga si leggono da destra verso sinistra, in maniera opposta a come i lettori occidentali sono abituati a leggere. Questa caratteristica è mantenuta anche una volta che il manga viene tradotto, dunque, è molto importante essere a conoscenza del senso di lettura dei fumetti giapponesi per poter poterli leggere correttamente. Nei fumetti un altro aspetto rilevante è il linguaggio visivo che collabora assieme agli elementi linguistici per apportare un significato. Il linguaggio visivo (*visual language*) è determinato dalla cultura di appartenenza, per esempio i fumetti americani sono molto colorati, invece i manga sono in bianco e nero. Cohn (2010: 191) sottolinea quanto i simboli e gli elementi visivi possano differire da una cultura all'altra e avere significati distinti. Per questa ragione Rampant (2010) afferma che i traduttori e i lettori devono conoscere i simboli e gli elementi della cultura nella quale è stato scritto il fumetto per poter comprendere appieno i disegni e dunque poter tradurre o leggere l'opera. La quarta sezione della tesi intitolata *A brief overview on manga history* (una breve panoramica sulla storia dei manga) studia le origini del fumetto giapponese e come questo abbia subito dei cambiamenti nel corso del tempo. Alcuni studiosi ritengono che probabilmente le origini dei manga siano da ricercare nelle opere di narrativa illustrata orizzontale del dodicesimo secolo chiamate *emakimono*; altri studiosi invece sostengono che le origini del manga devono essere ricercate in altre opere, in particolare, in quelle dell'ottavo secolo chiamate *Eingakyo.* Bouissou (2010: 19) afferma che i manga come li conosciamo oggi si sono sviluppati soprattutto a partire dagli anni Venti del Novecento e che dopo gli anni Quaranta le loro vendite sono aumentate esponenzialmente. In seguito negli anni Ottanta si è cominciato

a vendere i manga anche nei paesi occidentali, in particolar modo, negli Stati Uniti. La quinta sezione, dal titolo *Anime and manga in the USA and the UK* (anime e manga negli Stati Uniti e nel Regno Unito), si occupa di analizzare come sono stati recepiti i manga e gli anime negli Stati Uniti d'America e nel Regno Unito. Risulta interessante notare che sia gli anime che i manga hanno catturato molto prima l'attenzione del pubblico nord americano e successivamente del pubblico del Regno Unito. Hernández-Pérez *et al*. (2016:1) sostiene che ci sono pochi studi riguardo i fumetti e le serie di animazione giapponesi e il loro impatto nel Regno Unito e che solo recentemente l'interesse per i manga e gli anime sta aumentando, invece in America i fumetti giapponesi, ma soprattutto gli anime, hanno goduto e godono tuttora di un grande successo. In Europa sia le serie animate giapponesi che i manga hanno ottenuto un buon riscontro, specialmente in Francia e in Italia. Per questa ragione la sesta sezione del primo capitolo *Anime and manga in Italy* (anime e manga in Italia) tratta del successo che questi prodotti hanno riscontrato in Italia e analizza brevemente la controversa questione della censura italiana. Il capitolo si conclude con la settima sezione intitolata *Death Note* vengono fornite alcune informazioni sul fumetto originale e le trame del manga e del capitolo autoconclusivo.

Il secondo capitolo intitolato *Comics translation, relay translation and crowdsourcing* (traduzione di fumetti, traduzione indiretta e *crowdsourcing*) si occupa della traduzione del fumetto, del concetto di traduzione indiretta ed infine di un recente fenomeno online che riguarda la traduzione, ovvero, *crowdsourcing*. Anche questo capitolo è diviso in sezioni, più precisamente in tre sezioni intitolate *Comics translation,*(traduzione di fumetti) *Relay, indirect and support translation* (traduzione indiretta e traduzione di supporto)e *Crowdsourcing*. La prima sezione studia come avviene la traduzione di un fumetto in ambito professionale. I disegni possono costituire una difficoltà, una limitazione per i traduttori in quanto, come affermano Zanettin (2014) e Celotti (2014), il messaggio linguistico è subordinato a quello visivo. Quando si traduce un fumetto mantenere la corrispondenza tra ciò che è scritto e ciò che è disegnato è fondamentale. Le immagini raramente vengono modificate perché la modifica di un disegno è un'attività dispendiosa, sebbene attualmente sia più facile grazie allo sviluppo di nuove tecnologie e software più aggiornati. Tuttavia, l'editore può scegliere di apportare alcune modifiche soprattutto se il fumetto e destinato ai bambini. Le modifiche apportate non dipendono quasi mai da ragioni traduttive, ma spesso da motivi culturali:

immagini pornografiche o offensive possono essere rimosse. Questa prima sezione è suddivisa a sua volta in altre sottosezioni dove sono analizzate con degli esempi alcune strategie e tecniche traduttive che spesso i traduttori professionisti adottano per tradurre gli effetti comici, gli elementi e i riferimenti culturali, gli elementi scritti nei disegni ad esempio i cartelli, le iscrizioni e rendere i nomi dei personaggi e gli effetti sonori. La comicità dipende molto dalla cultura di partenza, dunque, è molto complicata da rendere. Kaindl (2004) afferma che è importante identificare la tipologia di humor presente nella vignetta e poi decidere la strategia traduttiva da utilizzare. In particolare, l'elemento comico può trovarsi solo nell'immagine o viceversa solo nel testo, oppure può essere dato dalla combinazione tra l'immagine e il testo. Tradurre gli elementi e i riferimenti culturali presenti in un fumetto può essere molto complesso perché si possono trovare sia nel testo che nell'immagine. Per rendere gli effetti sonori si può ricorrere a distinte strategie e tecniche traduttive come, ad esempio, utilizzare un equivalente nella lingua d'arrivo, usare un equivalente inglese o mantenere l'effetto sonoro così com'è nell'originale. Le scritte che si trovano nei disegni, come le iscrizioni, i cartelli, e non nei fumetti, vengono solitamente tradotte quando apportano un'informazione utile per la comprensione della vicenda, mentre quando non sono ritenute fondamentali non sono sempre tradotte. I nomi dei personaggi possono essere mantenuti come nell'originale, tradotti secondo le convenzioni della cultura d'arrivo, oppure ne possono essere inventati di nuovi. I nomi propri possono avere un significato nella lingua d'origine e in questo caso spesso la sfumatura di significato espressa è molto difficile da rendere nella lingua d'arrivo.

La seconda sezione *Relay translation* (traduzione indiretta) si occupa della traduzione indiretta, in quanto la traduzione analizzata nel terzo capitolo è una traduzione che procede a sua volta dalla traduzione inglese dell'originale in giapponese. Al fine di definire i concetti di *relay translation, indirect translation* e di support *translation* (traduzione indiretta e traduzione di supporto) è stato seguito lo studio di Cay Dollerup (2000). R*elay translation* (traduzione indiretta) è una traduzione che viene portata a termine a partire da una traduzione che è stata pubblicata e non dall'originale. *Indirect translation* (traduzione indiretta) è una traduzione di un'opera a partire da un'altra traduzione intermedia non destinata ad essere pubblicata. S*upport translation* (traduzione di supporto) è quella traduzione che viene utilizzate dai traduttori come supporto per vedere come i loro colleghi hanno reso lo stesso testo. Spesso, come afferma Washbourne

(2013) la traduzione indiretta viene utilizzata quando il testo originale non è più reperibile, basti pensare al caso di alcuni testi sacri, oppure questo tipo di traduzione può essere svolta nel caso in cui manchino traduttori esperti in una determinata lingua, o per ragioni di diritti d'autore o per ragioni di costo. Ringmar (2007) afferma che la traduzione indiretta gioca un ruolo fondamentale in quanto permette di trasferire un messaggio da una cultura ad un'altra e, quindi, avvicinare delle culture diverse. Tuttavia, queste pratiche di traduzione non sono apprezzate da tutti gli studiosi, molti ritengono che tradurre indirettamente porti a commettere gravi errori in quanto gli errori presenti nella traduzione intermedia vengono poi replicati nella traduzione finale. Nella seconda sezione inoltre sono trattati brevemente anche il concetto di inglese come *lingua franca* e la traduzione dal giapponese all'inglese. L'inglese attualmente è una lingua dominante che viene utilizzata per comunicare a livello globale e spesso viene utilizzata anche come lingua intermedia da cui realizzare le traduzioni di anime e manga. Conoscere qualche nozione su come si traduce dal giapponese all'inglese può essere utile per capire com'è avvenuta la traduzione del capitolo autoconclusivo dall'originale giapponese all'inglese.

La terza sezione si occupa di *crowdsourcing* ovvero di un fenomeno recente che riguarda la traduzione online. Al giorno d'oggi le modalità con cui vengono distribuiti i testi, intesi in senso lato, come manuali, riviste, prodotti multimediali, notizie e annunci pubblicitari, e i contenuti stessi di questi testi hanno subito cambiamenti drastici dovuti agli sviluppi della tecnologia e dell'informatica, per cui anche la traduzione ha subito importanti cambiamenti e, in particolare, la traduzione online ha acquisito un peso importante nella professione dei traduttori. Secondo la Commissione Europea il termine *crowdsourcing* è stato coniato da Jeff Howe nel 2006. Ambati *et al*. (2012: 1191) definiscono *crowdsourcing* come il processo di distribuzione di compiti ad un vasto numero di utenti su Internet. Questi compiti normalmente riguardano l'ambito linguistico o visivo e alcuni risultano molto complessi per i computer, ma sono molto più facili da realizzare per un essere umano. Per quanto concerne la traduzione online, O'Hagan (2009) sostiene che i primi ad organizzare gruppi di lavoro online sono stati proprio i fan di manga e anime utilizzarono la rete per collaborare, nonostante una notevole distanza separasse i membri del gruppo. I gruppi di traduzione online si organizzano in modo tale che ogni membro svolga un determinato compito che può essere la traduzione, l'inserimento di sottotitoli o del testo tradotto, la distribuzione e la pubblicazione del

prodotto ultimato online. Vari studiosi tra cui O'Hagan (2009), Rampant (2010), Chambers (2012), Zanettin (2014), Delforouz *et al*. (2018) osservano che i gruppi di traduzione online lavorano gratuitamente e spesso sono composti da traduttori non professionisti, per questa ragione la motivazione gioca un ruolo fondamentale. Delforouz *et al*. (2018) afferma che molti traducono manga dall'inglese o dal giapponese per poter apprendere meglio la lingua. Tuttavia, la motivazione più importante per questi traduttori non professionisti rimane la consapevolezza di poter rendere nella loro lingua fumetti e serie di animazione che nel loro paese non sono stati pubblicati o trasmessi dalle reti nazionali o che sono stati in parte censurati. Delforouz *et al*. (2018) aggiungono che ci sono altre motivazioni che spingono questi gruppi di traduzione online a tradurre, per esempio i traduttori non professionisti sono motivati dalle loro passioni, in quanto molto spesso queste persone non si occupano nella loro vita di tradurre o di lavorare in ambito dell'editoria, ma sono persone che amano leggere i fumetti o vedere le serie animate giapponesi. A questo proposito O'Hagan (2009) e altri studiosi sottolineano che normalmente i membri di questi gruppi di traduzione online non sono professionisti del settore della traduzione, ma sono conoscitori esperti di anime e manga; per cui normalmente non adottano le giuste tecniche di traduzione molto spesso perché non ne hanno conoscenza, però conoscono bene il prodotto. Questo accade soprattutto nell'ambito della traduzione audiovisuale, poiché come afferma Chambers (2012) molto spesso chi si occupa di inserire i sottotitoli nelle serie di animazione giapponesi non rispetta le norme che vengono impiegate dagli esperti in sottotitolazione. La terza sezione del secondo capitolo si suddivide in tre sottosezioni dove si studiano i fenomeni "*digisub*" e "*scanlation*" e vengono analizzate alcune delle differenze più rilevanti tra le tradizioni di manga fatte da traduttori professionisti e quelle di non professionisti. La traduzione di anime online è anche conosciuta con i termini "*fansub*" o "*digisub*", si tratta di un fenomeno che affonda le sue radici negli anni Ottanta quando le serie animate giapponesi venivano vendute in videocassetta. All'epoca era molto difficile inserire i sottotitoli proprio perché il formato sul quale si doveva poi agire era il VHS. Oggi tradurre e inserire sottotitoli è più economico e più semplice che in passato grazie allo sviluppo della tecnologia che ha facilitato il lavoro sia ai professionisti che ai non professionisti. Zanettin (2014:11) afferma che con il termine "*scanlation"* si indicano quelle pratiche che riguardano la traduzione e la distribuzione di manga online. Sono più recenti rispetto alle

pratiche di "*digisub*" e consistono nel fare delle scannerizzazioni delle pagine di un fumetto che poi vengono tradotte. Dopo aver rimosso il testo originale dalle scannerizzazioni, le vignette vengono dunque riempite con il testo tradotto e distribuite online. Queste pratiche però sono illegali, in quanto tradurre e distribuire dei materiali online senza il permesso dell'autore o della casa editrice è illegale. Chambers (2012) sottolinea che alcune case editrici giapponesi sono contrarie a queste pratiche perché possono perdere una parte del loro profitto, mentre altre case editrici giapponesi supportano queste pratiche in quanto aumentano le vendite di prodotti legate al merchandising, sebbene le vendite di anime e manga diminuiscano. Inoltre molte case editrici giapponesi sostengono che queste pratiche di traduzione online possano essere utili per capire se un manga possa avere successo anche all'estero. Se un manga viene tradotto e distribuito illegalmente in una nazione, allora le case editrici di quella nazione possono decidere di comprare quel determinato fumetto giapponese e di farlo tradurre da dei professionisti. Infatti normalmente i gruppi di traduzione online rimuovono dai loro siti i file multimediali o le scannerizzazioni dei manga nel caso in cui quei prodotti venissero acquistati dalle case editrici e poi venduti ufficialmente all'interno del paese, anche se come evidenzia Chambers (2012) non tutti i gruppi di traduzione online eliminano definitivamente i loro contenuti una volta che è uscita la traduzione originale. Nonostante il fatto che i siti che distribuiscono manga ed anime online poi rimuovano le loro traduzioni, persiste comunque la questione etica sulla legalità di queste pratiche. O'Hagan (2009) sottolinea che le questioni etiche riguardano anche i traduttori e la loro posizione nel mercato, in quanto molte traduzioni online vengono fatte gratuitamente. Infatti, la Commissione Europea sottolinea che molte compagnie abusano di chi si occupa di traduzioni online e che facciano profitto del lavoro gratuito di altre persone. Nonostante i grossi rischi che comporta il *crowdsourcing* e i cambiamenti alla professione stessa dei traduttori, O'Hagan (2009) afferma che i traduttori devono stare al passo con i tempi e cercare di sfruttare al meglio i cambiamenti e le possibilità che offre questo nuovo modo di fare traduzioni.

Dopo aver analizzato il manga come prodotto, il suo successo nei paesi occidentali, come avviene la traduzione di un fumetto in un contesto professionale, il concetto di traduzione indiretta ed infine le pratiche di traduzione online, si passa dunque all'analisi della traduzione del capitolo autoconclusivo racchiusa all'interno del terzo

capitolo di questa tesi. Il terzo capitolo si intitola *Translation* a*nalysis* (analisi della traduzione) ed è diviso in varie sezioni nelle quali sono state analizzate le seguenti categorie di analisi: la traduzione degli elementi linguistici scritti nei disegni (come iscrizioni, cartelli), la resa degli effetti sonori, dei nomi dei personaggi e degli elementi e riferimenti culturali, la traduzione degli effetti comici e i problemi traduttivi che si trovano nella traduzione italiana. La prima sezione è un'introduzione dove si spiega brevemente come si svolge l'analisi. Si specifica inoltre che le categorie di analisi applicate nel terzo capitolo sono le stesse che sono state studiate nel secondo e che i parametri per la revisione (*revision paramters*) di Mossop (2020) sono utilizzati per l'identificazione degli errori presenti nella traduzione italiana. La seconda sezione si concentra sugli aspetti generali del fumetto come il genere, il pubblico a cui è destinato, dove si possono leggere le traduzioni e il senso di lettura. Seguono dunque varie sottosezioni che descrivono le varie categorie di analisi. Gli elementi linguistici che si trovano nei disegni sono sempre stati tradotti nella versione inglese, ma non nella traduzione italiana. Si deve considerare che questa traduzione è stata fatta da un gruppo di traduttori online e che manipolare un disegno richiede molto tempo e molta esperienza. Per rendere gli effetti sonori sono state utilizzate diverse strategie, alcuni suoni sono stati resi in italiano, alcuni sono stati omessi, invece altri sono stati lasciati in inglese. Tutti i suoni e le onomatopee scritti in giapponese non sono stati modificati nella traduzione italiana, invece in quella inglese gli equivalenti sono stati aggiunti in piccolo vicino al testo giapponese. Nel capitolo autoconclusivo il protagonista Minoru Tanaka dice una frase ironica sulla morte mentre guarda il suo compito di inglese dove ha preso un brutto voto, nel testo inglese dice *I wish I could hit my head on the corner of a block of tofu and die*, che è stato tradotto letteralmente in italiano "Vorrei poter sbattere la testa contro l'angolo di un blocco di tofu e morire". Si tratta di un'assurdità perché non si può morire sbattendo la testa contro qualcosa di così morbido come il tofu, che è un alimento tradizionale della cultura asiatica a base di soia. Sarebbe interessante poter leggere il testo originale in giapponese per poter comprendere se si tratta di un modo di dire e il riferimento alla cultura culinaria. Tradurre quindi gli elementi e i riferimenti culturali è molto complesso soprattutto quando la traduzione non avviane direttamente dal testo originale, ma è una traduzione indiretta. Spesso gli elementi e i riferimenti culturali possono essere adattati alla cultura d'arrivo, ma i cambiamenti apportati possono non

essere necessari per un'altra cultura. Nel capitolo autoconclusivo ci sono dei riferimenti alla cultura giapponese, per esempio gli *shinigami*, ovvero dei della morte giapponesi. Sia nella traduzione inglese che in quella italiana viene mantenuto il termine giapponese. Dato che si tratta di un capitolo autoconclusivo che segue la pubblicazione della serie manga originale, il lettore inglese già conosce il termine shinigami perché utilizzato anche nella traduzione del fumetto originale. Invece nella traduzione italiana del fumetto originale il termine shinigami non è utilizzato, ma è utilizzato nella versione italiana della serie animata tratta dal manga. Dato che questo capitolo autoconclusivo è destinato a chi conosce la serie originale, i lettori comprendono perfettamente il temine giapponese. Il sistema scolastico è un altro elemento culturale presente nel testo inglese che risulta essere problematico da tradurre in quanto differisce in ogni paese. Nella traduzione inglese, che è la stessa sia per il pubblico europeo che per quello americano, i termini utilizzati per indicare le scuole frequentate dal protagonista sono *elementary school* e *middle school*. Gli equivalenti italiani utilizzati nella traduzione sono 'scuole elementari' e 'scuole medie' e sono adeguati in quanto sono le denominazioni corrette. I nomi dei personaggi sono stati traslitterati dal giapponese all'inglese e nella traduzione italiana sono stati trascritti come nella traduzione inglese. Tuttavia, i personaggi che compaiono nel capitolo autoconclusivo (con l'eccezione del protagonista Minoru Tanaka) sono presenti anche nel manga originale ed esiste una versione italiana dei loro nomi (che sono stati traslitterati dal giapponese all'italiano). Anche se i nomi della versione inglese non differiscono molto da quelli della versione ufficiale italiana del fumetto originale, sarebbe stato più accurato utilizzare i nomi come sono stati traslitterati nella versione italiana. Per quanto riguarda il nome del protagonista di questo capitolo autoconclusivo, ovvero Minoru Tanaka, è stato mantenuto il nome come traslitterato nella versione inglese. Dato che la traduzione ufficiale di questo capitolo autoconclusivo deve ancora essere pubblicata mantenere il nome del protagonista così come è scritto nella traduzione inglese è una buona strategia: è facile da leggere per un lettore italiano.

Per l'identificazione dei problemi traduttivi sono stati impiegati i parametri di revisione di Mossop (2020). Nella traduzione italiana si possono notare alcuni errori di battitura, anche se non sono molti questa tipologia di errori distraggono il lettore perché rallentano il processo di lettura. Un esempio si può trovare a pagina tre dove il dio della morte Ryuk è rappresentato mentre sta volando verso il mondo degli umani e pensa

“Potrei usare questo quaderno per far sì che qualche umano mi di dia mangiare”. In questa frase ci sono due errori di battitura ovvero ‘di dia’ in quanto la versione corretta è ‘dia da’, prima il verbo ‘dare’ alla terza persona del congiuntivo e poi la preposizione semplice ‘da’. La traduzione italiana a volte risulta poco idiomatica nelle parti in cui è stata tradotta letteralmente: alcune parole non sono adatte al contesto e si può trovare anche qualche collocazione sbagliata come quando Minoru chiede a Ryuk più informazioni “sulle azioni commesse da Kira”, le collocazioni corrette possibili potrebbero essere ‘compiere un’azione’ oppure ‘commettere crimini’. Nel caso specifico Kira era un assassino e commetteva crimini per non farsi scoprire dalla polizia, ‘crimini commessi’ potrebbe essere una soluzione. La traduzione italiana non è sempre accurata, per esempio quando i compagni di classe del protagonista stanno parlando dell’offerta da *300 billion dollars* la cifra è stata erroneamente tradotta con milioni, ma l’equivalente italiano di *billion* è miliardi.

In conclusione, analizzare e tradurre un fumetto non è facile in quanto si deve tenere in considerazione la relazione tra immagine e testo. La traduzione analizzata nel terzo capitolo è buona, anche se può essere migliorata attraverso la correzione degli errori e l’inserimento degli elementi linguistici che non sono stati tradotti perché difficili da modificare. Questa traduzione è stata portata a termine da dei traduttori non professionisti e questo va considerato in quanto non essendo degli esperti non hanno una conoscenza approfondita delle strategie e delle tecniche traduttive. Inoltre, si deve tenere in considerazione che è una traduzione indiretta e che ci sono state delle problematiche legate al fatto che la traduzione non sia avvenuta direttamente dal giapponese: l’ironia e i riferimenti culturali ne sono chiari esempi. Si sarebbe potuto approfondire ulteriormente questo aspetto confrontando l’originale con la traduzione inglese e successivamente con la traduzione indiretta italiana per identificare e studiare le differenze tra i testi. Ulteriori studi potrebbero focalizzarsi sul diverso uso degli elementi tipografici nelle diverse traduzioni del capitolo autoconclusivo, e potrebbero analizzare altri fumetti tradotti indirettamente e comparare le traduzioni con gli originali.