

Animation Form in Indonesian News Text

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Abstract. In order to demonstrate the degree of individuation of the entity of personhood that occurs in the news texts, this paper analyzes the element of animation in Indonesian news texts from *kompas.com* and *cnnindonesia.com*. According to the study, Indonesian writers and speakers frequently refer to people using common noun phrases, illustrating the purpose of reference in relation to other people. The idea of news texts emphasizes information, therefore it would be more efficient to mention a person's functions rather than using pronouns to refer to them, even though this can lessen the level of individuation of an animate thing.

Keywords: animation, news text, liveliness

1 Introduction

Animacy has been widely analyzed in various fields, such as cognitive science and linguistics, yet its application to Indonesian news texts still needs to be explored. Animacy, as generally defined by [1], refers to the distinction between living and non-living entities. This concept is crucial for understanding variations in psychological and linguistic behavior. Moreover, [2] elaborated on animacy as a characteristic associated with the ability to perform independent actions, such as movement or communication. For instance, humans and animals are considered animate due to their ability to act autonomously, while objects like chairs or books are inanimate, as they lack this capability.

A further dimension of animacy is its relationship with agency, as highlighted by [3], who argued that animate entities, particularly humans, are more agentive than inanimate ones. However, the distinction between agency and animacy must fully capture the complexity of animacy hierarchies. For example, while humans are undoubtedly more agentive than inanimate objects, it is illogical to argue that one human is inherently more animate than another. This indicates animacy's nuanced and layered nature and its implications for linguistic analysis.

While studies on animacy are abundant, research specifically focusing on its manifestation in news texts is limited. Previous works such as [4], [5], and [6] explored various dimensions of animacy but still need to address its application in the context of news discourse. One notable exception is [7], who analyzed animacy by comparing its expression in English and Japanese texts. This gap highlights the need to investigate how animacy operates within Indonesian news texts to provide insights into linguistic practices in media discourse.

Indonesian news texts represent a unique opportunity for studying animacy, as their linguistic choices often reflect societal and cultural norms. For instance, using specific noun phrases to describe animate entities may indicate underlying preferences or constraints in representing agency and individuation. Despite its potential significance, a comprehensive study has yet to examine how animacy is linguistically encoded in Indonesian news texts, leaving a gap in understanding how these texts depict animate versus inanimate entities.

To address this gap, the author aims to apply the framework developed by [7] to analyze animacy in Indonesian news texts. This framework systematically examines how animate entities are represented across different languages and can reveal patterns unique to Indonesian media discourse. By adopting this approach, the study seeks to fill the research void and contribute to the broader understanding of animacy in non-Western contexts.

Preliminary findings indicate that Indonesian news texts often use common noun phrases to refer to animate entities. This linguistic choice reduces the individuation and agency of these entities, as the surrounding phrases primarily define their roles. Such a pattern contrasts with other languages where animate entities might be individualized through more specific lexical or syntactic strategies.

In conclusion, this study seeks to illuminate how Indonesian news texts encode animacy, particularly in treating animate entities. By addressing a significant gap in the literature, the research enhances the understanding of animacy in linguistic theory. It provides insights into the Indonesian context's interplay between language, culture, and media.

1.1 Theoretical Foundation

The biological definition of animality is all living things, including plants. In contrast to the definition of animate in linguistics, which defines animate as an entity that has ideas and the will to act, as mentioned by [8], linguistic animacy is usually defined based on an entity's ability to act or trigger events voluntarily and how this is formally realized in language. Humans are considered to be the most animate entities because, for example, they are able to sense and initiate events with intent. Many entities, such as worms or sponges (not to mention plants, fungi or bacteria), need to be linguistically animate, as their formal treatment differs from that of higher-animate animals.

[7] states that one aspect of animacy coding relies on the extent to which a given entity is expressed as a highly sentient individual being acting of its own free will. The degree of individuation will be explored from two different points of view: the opposition between people (including personified non-humans) as individuals and people defined in specific categories and roles and between people as individuals and people as masses.

Example:

- a. Can I speak to *John*, please?
- b. Can I speak to *the Junior Bursar*, please?

The most notable difference between the above clauses is that the referent, John, who works at a certain university as a *Junior Bursar*, is treated more individually in (a) than in (b), which can be interpreted that this person is regarded as an institutionalized representative of a certain social role or function.

People with particular responsibilities or positions that can be indicated by social identities, such as their duties in society, can be included in common noun phrases. A person can be a father, son, grandson, husband, lover, brother, uncle, cousin, physics lecturer at a certain

university, acting head of the physics department, chauffeur, owner of the old Big Merc, customer, former company president, very nice man, intoxicated man, and someone else entirely. A specific attribute of the referent is assumed by each of these formulations. On the other hand, because they do not encode a specific role or relationship, personal pronouns refer to the subject in question as a “whole” individual.

Foley and Van Valin in [7] give an example of a hierarchy based on syntactic/semantic categories under the heading 'animacy hierarchy', namely:

speaker/addressee > 3rd person pronouns > human proper nouns > human common nouns > other animate nouns > inanimate nouns

With regard to the animation hierarchy above, the level of sapience of an entity also affects the entity's individuation scale. Dahl and Fraurud (in [7]) state that Individuation scale is the extent to which we highlight certain entities as clearly identifiable and delimited individuals.

This article will examine the element of animation in Indonesian news texts from *kompas.com* and *cnnindonesia.com*, with the aim and objective of showing the extent of individuation of the entity of being that appears in news texts. Whether common noun phrases are repeatedly used in news texts to refer to the same individual, to show the role/function of the reference and its relationship with other individuals. One reason for this tendency, as mentioned by Yamamoto (1999), is that the reason for feeling more comfortable using common noun phrases, which make the referent seem somewhat less individualistic than using personal pronouns, depends largely on the sociocultural values of the speakers of the language.

2 Methods

This article employs a qualitative research method to explore how animacy is encoded in Indonesian news texts. Qualitative research is particularly suited for examining phenomena in their natural context, offering rich insights into underlying patterns and meanings. As [8] explains, qualitative research methods are grounded in the philosophy of postpositivism, emphasizing that knowledge is constructed through interaction with the natural world and the people within it. This approach contrasts with positivism, which aims to establish objective truths through quantifiable data. In qualitative research, the researcher plays an active role in interpreting data, making them the key instrument in the research process. Rather than seeking to generalize findings to larger populations, qualitative research aims to provide a deep understanding of the particularities of a given context, thereby offering a more nuanced view of the subject under study.

Data collection for this study was carried out using two primary techniques: listening and documentation. Listening, in this context, refers to the researcher's active engagement with the textual data, allowing for the identification of relevant phrases or words that reference animate entities within the news texts. Documentation techniques involved collecting written data from online news sources such as *kompas.com* and *cnnindonesia.com*. These news platforms were selected because they are among the most prominent in Indonesia, providing a diverse array of texts that reflect the country's current events and social discourse. The written data collected consisted of articles that included references to animate entities—both human and non-human—within their narratives.

The data collection process involved a systematic approach, wherein selected news texts were analyzed to identify sentences that contained phrases or words referring to animate entities. The focus was on identifying specific linguistic choices that represented animate beings, as these

choices are central to the study of animacy in the context of Indonesian news discourse. As the research progressed, the collected data were further reduced or selected to align more closely with the research objectives, ensuring that the focus remained on the portrayal of animacy within the texts.

Following data collection, the next step was data analysis. The analytical approach used in this research was inductive, meaning that patterns and insights were drawn from the data itself rather than being imposed by pre-established theories or hypotheses. The inductive analysis approach allows the researcher to remain open to emerging patterns and themes, which can lead to a more comprehensive and grounded understanding of the research topic. In this study, the focus was on identifying how animate entities were linguistically represented and how these representations reflected the broader cultural and societal norms regarding agency, individuation, and personhood in Indonesian media.

Data analysis was conducted using the identity method, which involves the categorization and sorting of linguistic elements based on their function and meaning within the text. This technique allows the researcher to examine how different animate entities are treated in terms of individuation and agency. For instance, the identity method helps to identify whether animate entities are portrayed as individuals with distinct identities or whether they are treated as representatives of broader categories, roles, or functions within society. The basic technique of determining element sorting was employed to group similar linguistic structures and identify overarching patterns in how animacy was encoded across different articles.

The results of this analysis were presented informally, using ordinary language that is easily accessible and understandable. This approach was chosen to ensure that the findings could be communicated clearly and effectively to a broad audience, including those who may not be familiar with complex linguistic terminology or technical jargon. By presenting the results in a straightforward manner, the study aims to make the insights about animacy in Indonesian news texts more accessible and meaningful, particularly for those interested in the intersection of language, culture, and media.

Through this qualitative research process, the study provides a detailed examination of how animacy is represented in Indonesian news texts. By focusing on the linguistic choices made in these texts, the research highlights the subtle ways in which language reflects and reinforces cultural norms and societal values, particularly in the context of media discourse.

3 Result and Discussion

The choice of words - in the form of noun phrases or pronouns - for entities made by speakers or writers is an attitude that can make different references for listeners or readers. Here are some sentences quoted from the news text of the *kompas.com* website.

Table 1. News Text of the Kompas.Com Website

Excerpt from <i>kompas.com</i> news text
<i>President Joko Widodo (Jokowi)</i> checked the prices of basic commodities in traditional markets during a series of working visits in Central Java Province on Monday (10/4/2023). This time, <i>President Jokowi</i> visited Legi Market in Solo. During the inspection, the Head of State invited <i>his grandson, Jan Ethes Sinarendra</i> and <i>Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo</i> .

From the results of the review, *Jokowi* stated that in general the prices of basic commodities had decreased.

In addition, according to Jokowi, rice prices have also decreased, although not significantly.

The *former Mayor of Solo* then hopes that the price of rice can fall even lower along with the large harvest.

The choice of words, particularly the use of noun phrases or pronouns, reveals a deliberate linguistic strategy in Indonesian news texts. By analyzing the excerpt from **Kompas.com**, it becomes evident that the text employs a consistent pattern of naming animate entities with a combination of proper nouns and their associated roles. For instance, phrases such as “*President Jokowi*” and “*Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo*” combine specific names with social or institutional roles. This dual-layered naming serves multiple purposes: it informs readers about the identities and roles of the individuals while simultaneously emphasizing their societal and institutional affiliations. Such linguistic choices reflect the intent to ensure clarity and enrich the informational value of the text, particularly in a context where roles are significant for understanding the narrative.

One significant observation is how this naming convention individualizes animate entities. Proper nouns, like “*Jokowi*” or “*Ganjar Pranowo*”, personalize the individuals and anchor them as specific agents within the narrative. However, the addition of their roles, such as “*President*” or “*Central Java Governor*”, highlights their institutional or societal responsibilities. This duality positions the entities both as individuals capable of action and as representatives of their roles. For example, “*President Jokowi*” is not only presented as a person performing actions but also as the head of state, whose activities hold national significance. This dual reference bridges individual agency with broader social function, which is crucial in shaping the reader's perception of the individuals involved.

Additionally, the hierarchy of representation in the text is apparent through the comparison between noun phrases and pronouns. Entities identified with their roles and names, such as “*Former Mayor of Solo*” or “*President Jokowi*”, occupy a higher cognitive and social hierarchy than those referred to by third-person pronouns like “*he*”. Pronouns, while used sparingly, generally follow initial references that have already established the entity's role and identity. This pattern suggests a deliberate strategy to maintain clarity and avoid ambiguity, ensuring that readers can easily connect the pronouns back to the previously mentioned entities. The scarcity of pronouns in favour of noun phrases reinforces the role-based focus of the narrative, prioritizing institutional or societal clarity over simplicity.

Another key point is the informational richness conveyed through role-based noun phrases. By frequently including titles or roles, such as “*President*” or “*Governor*”, the text embeds additional context about the entities' functions and significance within the reported events. For instance, referring to “*President Jokowi*” rather than simply “*Jokowi*” ensures that the reader remains aware of the president's institutional authority and the context of his actions. This focus on roles reflects the functional nature of news discourse, where the primary goal is to provide a clear and informative account of events. The inclusion of roles also aligns with cultural norms that value hierarchical relationships and respect for institutional positions, as seen in the Indonesian context.

The practice of combining roles with names also impacts the level of abstraction in the text. Animate entities referred to solely by their roles, such as “*Former Mayor of Solo*”, are presented as more abstract compared to those mentioned with both names and roles. This abstraction can serve a narrative purpose by shifting focus away from the individual and toward their function or contribution within the event. However, when names are included, as in “*Central Java*

Governor Ganjar Pranowo”, the entities become more concrete and relatable, allowing readers to connect the individual's actions with their personal and institutional identities.

Cognitively, these linguistic patterns reflect the interplay between animacy and social structure. The frequent use of role-based noun phrases aligns with animacy hierarchy theories, which suggest that linguistic representation often correlates with an entity's perceived importance or function. By naming animate entities with roles, the text implicitly reinforces their significance within the narrative, positioning them as agents of action and decision-making. For example, the repeated mention of “*President Jokowi*” highlights his prominence and the weight of his decisions within the reported events. This pattern not only aids in structuring the narrative but also reflects the societal emphasis on roles and responsibilities. The following text is taken from the online news site cnnindonesia.com:

Table 2. News Text Excerpt from Cnnindonesia.Com

Cnnindonesia.com news text excerpt
<i>Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto</i> has opened his voice about the proposed revision of Law (RUU) No. 34/2004 on the Indonesian National Army (TNI). Prabowo said he wanted to prevent leaks and corruption.
<i>Head of the TNI Information Center Laksda Julius Widjojono</i> said the revision of the TNI Law is still being discussed internally. <i>He</i> said there has been no approval from <i>TNI Commander Admiral Yudo Margono</i> for the revision of the TNI Law.
<i>Julius</i> said the proposed revision is based on the fact that there are currently many active soldiers who have insights into national interests and expertise needed by ministries/agencies.
Meanwhile, <i>military and defense observer at the Institute for Security and Strategic Studies (ISESS) Khairul Fahmi</i> assessed that the revision to Article 47 Paragraph 2 of the TNI Law was contrary to the mandate of reform.
<i>Fahmi</i> assessed that the new clause that allows active TNI soldiers in other ministries / institutions that need it according to presidential policy is a rubber rule.

This is also reflected in the news text above. It can be seen from the italicized phrases and words that Indonesian writers or speakers are more likely to use common noun phrases than personal pronouns. As in the words “Minister of Defense Prabowo Subianto”, Prabowo Subianto's entity is labeled with the role of Minister of Defense, thus reducing his individuality as an animate entity that is only able to create ideas and the will to take an action in accordance with his role. We can also see that the pronoun “He” as the third person singular referring to the Head of the TNI Information Center Laksda Julius Widjojono is also found in the text, but the frequency of its occurrence is not as frequent as the common noun phrase.

This study's findings emphasize the role of linguistic choices in shaping the representation of animate entities in Indonesian news texts. The prevalent use of common noun phrases over pronouns suggests a deliberate approach by Indonesian writers to convey roles and social functions rather than focusing on individual identities. This tendency aligns with the functional nature of news reporting, where providing context and clarity around an individual's social position can aid in comprehension and reinforce the informativeness of the narrative.

For example, by using phrases like “*Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto*” instead of a pronoun such as “he,” the text prioritizes the reader's understanding of Prabowo Subianto’s authoritative role within the context of the discussion on the TNI Law revision. This practice not only serves to specify the individual's role but also aligns with [7] observations that linguistic choices often reflect cultural and social conventions. In Indonesian news, where hierarchical relationships and societal roles are commonly foregrounded, referring to animate entities in

terms of their roles rather than as individualized beings can reinforce a more collective perspective.

Moreover, the choice between noun phrases and pronouns also reflects an underlying cognitive hierarchy in the text. Indonesian news discourse, by frequently referencing individuals through roles, implicitly places those roles within a broader social structure. This structuring aligns with Foley and Van Valin's animacy hierarchy, where their role's perceived significance influences the individuation of entities in society. For instance, the reference to "President Jokowi" repeatedly within a text strengthens the association of the animate entity (Jokowi) with the social function of the presidency, reinforcing the importance of his institutional identity over his own.

The implications of these linguistic choices extend to readers' perceptions, as they may interpret such references as indicative of a more socially collective or role-focused viewpoint. This use of common noun phrases and roles may be unique in contexts like Indonesian news, where the function of language includes informing readers while also embedding individuals within recognized social structures. Consequently, this linguistic feature underscores the intertwined relationship between animacy and social function, illustrating how cultural norms influence language use and perception in Indonesian media.

The linguistic choices in Indonesian news texts, particularly the preference for noun phrases over pronouns, reflect a complex interplay of animacy, clarity, and cultural norms. [1] argue that cognitive animacy often corresponds to linguistic animacy, with animate entities like humans frequently receiving specific and detailed linguistic representation. In the context of the analyzed texts, noun phrases such as "*President Jokowi*" or "*Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo*" emphasize individual identity and institutional roles. This linguistic strategy reinforces the referenced individuals' societal importance and aligns with readers' cognitive frameworks that prioritize animate and socially significant entities.

This preference for detailed noun phrases over pronouns also aligns with the typological perspective presented by [3], who highlights the significance of animacy in shaping grammatical structures and linguistic expressions. By frequently naming individuals with their titles, Indonesian news writers emphasize the hierarchical and role-based relationships that are culturally salient. This is further supported by [7], who notes that animacy and reference are intertwined, as animate entities with high social relevance are often explicitly identified to highlight their agency and importance.

Furthermore, the cultural context plays a crucial role in shaping these linguistic choices. [5] discuss how the concept of animacy in Javanese reflects a typology that integrates societal roles and relationships, mirroring broader Indonesian linguistic practices. The combination of roles and names in news texts resonates with this typology, where the linguistic representation extends beyond individual identity to emphasize social function and hierarchy. This approach aligns with [2] assertion that animacy detection in language involves biological and cognitive factors and socio-cultural considerations.

The prioritization of noun phrases over pronouns in Indonesian news discourse also aligns with [4] findings on genitive variation across languages, where animacy and specificity influence linguistic structures. The choice to use titles and names repeatedly, instead of simplifying with pronouns, serves to maintain specificity and avoid ambiguity. This reflects a deliberate effort by news writers to ensure clarity, especially when reporting on individuals in positions of authority or influence, as observed in the frequent mention of "*President Jokowi*" and his actions.

In conclusion, the linguistic choices in Indonesian news texts, as evidenced by the use of detailed noun phrases, are deeply rooted in theories of animacy, typology, and socio-cultural

values. These choices underscore the interplay between cognitive processing, linguistic structures, and cultural norms, effectively shaping the reader's perception of animate entities and their roles within the narrative. This approach enhances both clarity and informativeness, aligning with the primary objectives of news discourse in Indonesia.

4 Conclusion

After conducting research on news texts from two Indonesian online news sites, it can be concluded that Indonesian speakers or writers tend to use common noun phrases to refer to individuals, thus indicating the role or function of reference in relation to other individuals. Although this can reduce the level of individuation of an animate entity, the concept of news texts itself prioritizes information, so it is more effective to mention the roles that a person has rather than mentioning the person with pronouns.

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