Reliable words
Third person pronouns in Indonesian News Reports

DWI NOVERINI DJENAR

ABSTRACT
This article examines uses of Indonesian third person singular pronouns *ia* and *dia* in news reports. It takes as its departure point the general account of the pronouns which specifies that *ia* can occur only in subject position, while *dia* can occur in subject or object position. The article shows that, although both pronouns can occur in subject position, they differ distributionally and functionally. *Ia* occurs almost three times as frequently as *dia* and predominates in subject position, while *dia* occurs mostly in non-subject position. *Ia* is primarily used to convey the notion that the referent is a reliable and authoritative source of information and to focus on the referent as an agent or protagonist who is initiating or performing some action or a series of actions. By contrast, *dia* tends to be selected for contexts in which the referent is presented as a speaker who is elaborating on what has been said previously rather than introducing a new point. The predominance of *ia* in news report accords with its characterization as a pronoun strongly associated with formal registers.

KEYWORDS
Third person pronoun, news reports, reported speech, quotatives, rhetorical structure.

This article examines functional differences between two forms of third person pronouns in Indonesian news reports. It takes as its departure point the general account of the pronouns which specifies that *ia* can occur only in subject position, while *dia* can occur in subject or object position. The article shows that, although both pronouns can occur in subject position, they differ distributionally and functionally. *Ia* occurs almost three times as frequently as *dia* and predominates in subject position, while *dia* occurs mostly in non-subject position. *Ia* is primarily used to convey the notion that the referent is a reliable and authoritative source of information and to focus on the referent as an agent or protagonist who is initiating or performing some action or a series of actions. By contrast, *dia* tends to be selected for contexts in which the referent is presented as a speaker who is elaborating on what has been said previously rather than introducing a new point. The predominance of *ia* in news report accords with its characterization as a pronoun strongly associated with formal registers.

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DWI NOVERINI DJENAR lectures in the Department of Indonesian Studies at the University of Sydney. She gained her MA in Asian Studies from La Trobe University and PhD in linguistics from the University of Melbourne. Novi is the author of Semantic, Pragmatic and Discourse Perspectives of Preposition Use: A Study of Indonesian Locatives (Pacific Linguistics 2007) and A Student’s Guide to Indonesian Grammar (OUP 2003). Her research interests are the interface between spoken and written discourse, person reference, representations of “place” in conversational narrative, and language in literature. Dwi Noverini Djenar may be contacted at: novi.djenar@sydney.edu.au.

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