



Analysis of Personification and Anthropomorphic Design Theory of “Kiko and Friends” Animation

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Abstract. Kiko and Friends is an Indonesian animated children's series about a young goldfish and his best friends. The conflict in this animated series involves a catfish, the antagonist who causes various problems. Kiko and his friends embark on different adventures to solve these problems. The background of this journal is based on observational data obtained through linkage analysis of case study books and articles related to the Indonesian animated series titled Kiko and Friends. The objectives of this study are to examine the application of anthropomorphism, particularly in the character design of the series, and to conduct a personification analysis of the serial characters. By achieving these objectives, it is hoped that this journal will facilitate the process of character design and enhance understanding. This paper aims to support Indonesian animation works by analyzing the animation "Kiko and Friends," shedding light on how this animation is meticulously crafted, considering the thoughtful design of each character, to enhance its exposure and publication. This idea will be conveyed using the content analysis method, as described in the book "Video Game Design" by Michael Salmond, and an article written by Umarova Nigora Amirjon Qizi on The Linguistic Analysis of Differing Peculiarities between Anthropomorphism and Personification. First, the study will identify characters whose designs are influenced by personification and anthropomorphic theory. Then, each character will be analyzed in detail using the respective theory.

Keywords: Anthropomorphic, Character, Design, Personification.

1 Introduction

Kiko and Friends is a beloved Indonesian animated children's series that has warmed the hearts of families all over the world. The series has been on the air since August 9, 2014 for the pre-season and on February 7, 2016, for Season 1 on RCTI (Indonesian TV Channel). Based on the hit comic "Kiko's Story" from the children's magazine "Just for Kids", this animated adaptation has become an unstoppable force in the world of children's entertainment. The show's main character, Kiko, is full of curiosity and a desire to explore the world. Kiko's colorful adventures are shared with his many friends, including Ting-Ting, Lola, Patino, and many more. Each episode is filled with excitement and laughter, as Kiko and his companions embark on fun-filled adventures that

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teach valuable life lessons along the way. With its engaging storylines, lovable characters, and heartwarming messages, this series has been a true hit with audiences of all ages. With its vibrant animation and charming characters, it's no wonder why Kiko and friends have quickly become a household name in the world of children's entertainment.

One such example is the main character, Kiko, who personifies a goldfish. The use of anthropomorphism and personification in this series adds depth and charm to the characters, making them interesting subjects for discussion. Each character's unique design and personality traits bring the show to life, engaging and entertaining audiences of all ages. Whether it's Kiko's sense of curiosity and adventure, or the other characters' quirky and charming personalities, these animated creations are sure to keep you coming back for more. With its entertaining storylines and catchy theme song, Kiko and Friends is destined to be a classic in the world of children's television.

In recent years, the use of personification and anthropomorphic theories in the world of animation character design has become increasingly popular. These theories offer designers a unique opportunity to blend human and animal traits, creating characters that are truly one-of-a-kind. This journal has chosen the theme of "Personification and Anthropomorphic Design for Kiko and Friends Animation" in order to provide designers with solid examples and a deeper understanding of how to create compelling characters that resonate with audiences. This journal will not only explore the anthropomorphic traits of each character in the animation, but it will also delve into the costuming choices that have gone into design, as these are integral elements of bringing characters to life on screen. Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting out in the world of animation, this journal will offer a wealth of information and inspiration. This paper aims to support Indonesian animation works by analyzing "Kiko and Friends," shedding light on how this animation is meticulously crafted with well-thought-out designs for each character. The analysis is intended to enhance its exposure and publication, showcasing the thoughtful design process behind the creation of this animation.

The discussions in this journal will be presented using content analysis methods presented in the Video Game Design by Salmond [1] and Qizi's The Linguistic Analysis of Differing Peculiarities between Anthropomorphism and Personification [2]. The first step will involve identifying character designs that are influenced by personification and anthropomorphic theory, followed by a detailed analysis of each character using the chosen theories.

This journal focuses on examining the character design in the animated series "Kiko and Friends" and its anthropomorphic connection to aquatic animals. With reference to Salmond's "Video Game Design" [1], it provides an in-depth explanation of how character design influences communication and the traits that should be portrayed. The guidebook describes the process of creating well-designed and recognizable characters, as well as the study of anthropomorphic relationships and personification. Additionally, Qizi's Linguistic Analysis of Differing Peculiarities between Anthropomorphism and Personification [2] explores the anthropomorphic relationship in conjunction with personification. Anthropomorphism involves the relationship between human and non-human characters, while personification involves attributing human characteristics to a character.

2 Methodology

The method used to discuss this study is the content analysis of the animated series titled "Kiko and Friends", based on the personification and anthropomorphic theories outlined in the Video Game Design by Salmond [1] and an article written Qizi [2] titled The Linguistic Analysis of Differing Peculiarities between Anthropomorphism and Personification. The analysis was carried out on several animated characters from "Kiko and Friends" that exemplify the concept of personification and anthropomorphism in relation to various aquatic animals.

The animated series features numerous characters that embody personification and anthropomorphic theories, each of which will be discussed individually while analyzing the personification and anthropomorphic theories depicted. Moreover, the study was conducted in several stages. Firstly, identifying the characters whose designs are influenced by personification and anthropomorphic theories. Secondly, analyzing each character using the respective theory thoroughly.

3 Result

Kiko, the main character of the animated series, "Kiko and Friends," is a smart, active, and adventurous character. Kiko's curiosity often leads him and his friends into amusing and enjoyable adventures, creating many memorable moments for the viewers. Kiko's personality has been developed based on a goldfish, making him curious and full of energy. In addition, Kiko's name is also a play on the Indonesian word for "goldfish," which is "Koki." "Koki" has been reversed to "Kiko," creating a unique name for the main character."



Fig. 1. Kiko Character Design (Source: kiko.fandom.com).

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Fig. 2. Goldfish (Source: liputan6.com)

Kiko, the main character of the animated series, "Kiko and Friends," is not only a smart, active, and adventurous character, but he is also an accurate representation of a goldfish's personality. Goldfish, a species of aquarium fish, displays a number of intelligent traits such as a strong memory and problem-solving abilities according to Setiawan [3]. The development of Kiko's character has also been influenced by the personification of the goldfish, resulting in a character who is curious and full of energy, just like a goldfish. Additionally, the cleverness of the fish is reflected in Kiko, as he has a high level of curiosity and is always eager to learn new things. The name of the character, Kiko, which is a play on the Indonesian word for "goldfish," further emphasizes the connection between Kiko and the goldfish.



Fig. 3. Kiko Character Design with fish scales on clothes (Source: kiko.fandom.com)

The representation of Kiko's character as a goldfish is a subtle form of personification that accurately depicts the natural behavior of the goldfish. It is represented by Kiko's personality traits, such as curiosity, high energy level, and intelligence. The use of fish scales in Kiko's clothing is a symbolic representation of his connection to goldfish. This

type of personification, known as a concrete representation, uses physical attributes to depict the personality or behavior of the character. The inclusion of this concrete representation reinforces the connection between Kiko and the goldfish, further highlighting the personification.



Fig. 4. Goldfish (Source: solaharthandal.com)



Fig. 5. Lola Character Design (Source: play.google.com)

Lola's character in the animated series "Kiko and Friends" is a personification of a Discus fish, a shy and gentle species that prefers peaceful environments. Lola's character has been designed in a feminine style, wearing a woman's onesie or dress, indicating her gentle nature. The character's anxiety and fear of crowds can be seen in Lola's demeanor, as she often becomes nervous or scared in chaotic environments. Furthermore, Lola is depicted as clean, organized, and highly demanding in her work, representing the high standards that the Discus fish is known for. This personification of Lola's character serves to provide a deeper understanding of the fish species and their characteristics.



Fig. 6. Discus fish's aquarium (Source: myrtlebeachdiscus.com)

The Discus fish, a popular aquarium species, must be kept in a dedicated aquarium exclusively for their species due to their specific environmental needs. The aquarium environment should be kept clean, neat, and minimally decorated, to provide an ideal living space for the fish. This distinct characteristic is reflected in Lola's character as a representation of the discreet category of personification, emphasizing her love for cleanliness and tidiness. Lola's character is often seen cleaning or organizing things in her environment, highlighting her desire for a clean and organized space, just like the Discus fish. Additionally, Lola's attention to detail and her need for perfectionism are also traits that are commonly associated with Discus fish, further reinforcing the personification as mentioned in *Aquafind* by Buttel [4].



Fig. 7. Lola character design with fish scale on skirt (Source: facebook.com)

Lola's character in the animated series "Kiko and Friends" is a representation of a Discus fish. The personification of this character falls under the discreet category, meaning that it is implied through subtle design elements and characterization instead of directly portraying the anthropomorphic relationship. The design of Lola's character, including her clothing, does not overtly showcase her connection to the Discus fish, but the use of fish scales on Lola's skirt as a design element can be seen as a subtle hint to her personified identity. Furthermore, the character's characterization as being shy, easily scared, and anxious echoes the natural behavior of the Discus fish, adding to the discreet nature of the personification [5].



Fig. 8. Discus Fish (Source: tafshare.com)



Fig. 9. Ting-Ting Character Design (Source: kiko.fandom.com)

Ting-ting is one of the primary characters in the animated series "Kiko and Friends." His character is depicted as being logical, creative, and brilliant, characteristics that have been personified from a crab. This innovative character enjoys creating new technologies and gadgets and is often seen as the problem-solver of the group. The connection between Ting-ting's character and a crab is further represented by her name, "Ting-ting," which is derived from the Indonesian word for crab "kepiting" and shortened to "Ting-ting." This discreet personification emphasizes the character's connection to the crab, while highlighting his brilliant and creative traits.



Fig. 10. Crab (Source: majalahhewan.co)

4 Discussion

Despite Ting-ting's logical, creative, and brilliant characteristics, his character also displays a shy nature, which is often shown as an uneasiness when interacting with new people. This shy nature of Ting-ting's character is a discreet representation of a personification of the crab's natural behavior. Crabs are known to be timid animals that prefer to hide in their shells when encountering other animals in their marine habitat. This personification further enhances the connection between Ting-ting's character and the crab, highlighting her shy and awkward nature in new situations as mentined by Shaby [6].



Fig. 11. Ting-Ting Character Design (Source: kiko.fandom.com)

Ting-ting's character in "Kiko and Friends" is a symbolic personification, represented by the robot suit he wears. This suit symbolizes and personifies a crab in various ways. The most prominent feature is the design of the robot claws that Ting-ting wears, which mirror the two red claws that a crab possesses.



Fig. 12. Crab (Source: bola.com/)



Fig. 13. Patino Character Design (Source: celebrity.okezone.com/)

Patino's character in "Kiko and Friends" is one of the more physically strong and confident individuals in the group, often taking charge during high-stakes situations. He often wears a wrestling costume or suit that features fins on top of his head, which may initially lead one to believe that he personifies an anthropomorphic shark. However, it is important to note that he is actually based on the iridescent shark, a type of catfish

originating from Southeast Asia. The iridescent shark, an endangered catfish species found in Southeast Asia, is not an actual shark despite its name according to Abhijeet [7]. The iridescent shark possesses characteristics similar to that of a shark, especially in terms of its fin structure. The name "Patino" is also derived from the Indonesian name for catfish, "Patin".



Fig. 14. Iridescent Shark (Source: istockphoto.com)

Catfish often live in groups of five to six individuals, yet they are known for their strong bonds and loyalty towards each other. This aspect of the catfish has been personified within Patino's character, who is portrayed as a loyal friend with a strong sense of duty. His character often supports his companions and enjoys assisting them in their daily activities. Patino's loyalty and willingness to help others are demonstrated through his actions, such as standing by his friends in times of crisis and providing guidance when needed. One of the key traits of a true catfish, loyalty, is emphasized in Patino's character as a symbol of the catfish's natural behavior, adding to the character's discreet classification of personification.

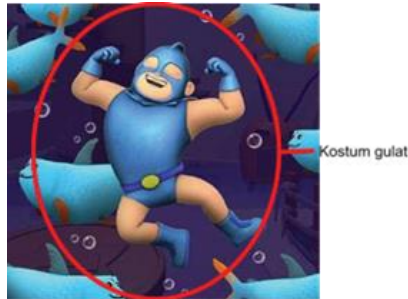


Fig. 15. Patino Character Design (Source: facebook.com)

The personification of Patino's character is categorized as symbolic personification, which openly portrays the applied anthropomorphism to the character. The character

and clothing designs of Patino clearly depict his anthropomorphic connection with catfish, particularly evident through the fin-shaped elements on his mask costume.



Fig. 16. Iridescent shark (Source: dictio.id)



Fig. 17. Poli Character Design (Source: twitter.com)

Poli's personality is quite unique and can be described as very honest but also quite shy, making it hard for them to share their feelings. It's interesting to note that Poli is represented as a betta fish, and like betta fish, they can sometimes get really upset easily. Studies on betta aggression have examined the effects of pharmacological interventions on aggressive responses and how aggression is modulated by the environment, prior social experience, and opponent characteristics according to Lichak, et al., [8]. Betta fish are known for their graceful movements, almost like martial arts, and this somehow reflects in Poli's character. When Poli does get angry, they have a calming trick up their sleeve: listening to music helps them relax and find their inner peace. So, Poli's character is a fascinating blend of honesty, shyness, a bit of a quick temper, and a love for soothing tunes as a way to chill out when things get heated.



Fig. 18. Beta Fish (Source: Aquadiction World)

Poli's character is depicted using a type of personification known as "discreet personification," which means it doesn't directly show the traits associated with anthropomorphism. This means that when people look at Poli's appearance and clothing, people might not immediately see a clear connection between Poli and Betta fish characteristics. One reason for this is that betta fish can come in a wide range of colors, and Poli's costume doesn't directly match any particular betta fish coloration.



Fig. 19. Poli Character Design (Source: Kiko.fandom.com)

The main design element that hints at the betta fish inspiration is the curved fin on Poli's hat. This curved fin serves as a subtle nod to the unique features of betta fish without making the connection too obvious. So, while Poli's character isn't explicitly anthropomorphic in its design, there are subtle touches that suggest the influence of betta fish characteristics in a more understated way.



Fig. 20. Karkus Character Design (Source: Kiko.fandom.com)

Karkus is a character who is part catfish and part human-like. He wears a bright yellow crown and a flashy orange cape that make him stand out. He's got a personality that's not too pleasant; he's often acting stuck-up, only thinking about himself, and gets upset pretty easily. But here's an interesting twist: Karkus has a soft spot for classical music and art, even though he's not the best singer due to his slurred voice. He's not a fan of doing hard work, but he's pretty good at making plans. These are interpretation of characteristics that can be found in common catfishes which is stereotyped as one of the low maintenance livestock where they are often found in waste disposal, murky rivers or ponds as mentioned by Elfidasari [9].

In the story, Karkus plays the role of the bad guy, the one causing trouble for the other characters. And what's really unique about him is that he's into fishing as a hobby, even though he's the bad guy. So, Karkus is this intriguing mix of a not-so-nice personality, artistic interests, and a strange hobby in a world where he causes problems for the good guys.



Fig. 21. Catfish (Source: lifestyle.okezone.com)

Karkus' appearance clearly shows his connection to catfish. He's designed with features like a mustache, a beard, and a tail that look just like those of a catfish. These elements make it obvious that he's meant to represent a catfish in a human-like form. It's fascinating how his design captures the essence of a catfish, making him stand out as a unique character in the story.

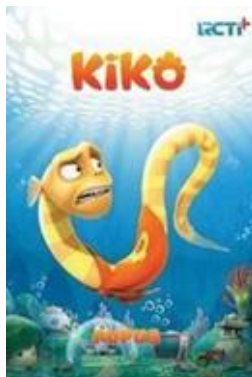


Fig. 22. Pupus Character Design (Source: Kiko.fandom.com)

Pupus is a character who plays a supportive role in the story, and he's also Karkus' right-hand person, helping out the main bad guy. This character is quite interesting because he's really good at sports but tends to be a bit clumsy and can be swayed by others easily. But what stands out most about Pupus is his kind and caring nature. Pupus is designed to look like a yellow eel, which is pretty cool. This means he's like an eel in human form, which adds a unique twist to his character.



Fig. 23. Yellow Eel (Source: Kompasiana.com)

In Pupus' case, his tendency to catch little fish really highlights the eel's natural instincts. Eels, in general, are experts at hunting smaller aquatic creatures, and they have a built-in desire to grab and devour those tiny fish that swim around them. The character Pupus embodies the behavior of an eel. It's like he's channeling the eel's inner predator, showcasing a connection between his actions and the typical habits of these underwater hunters. This similarity adds depth to Pupus' character and helps us understand his nature better in the story.



Fig. 34. Pupus Character Design (Source: Kiko.fandom.com)

The body shape of the Pupus character symbolically embodies the anthropomorphism of a yellow eel. The way his body is shaped, all long and without any arms or legs, just like a real eel. Though eel general features are pretty diverse, they surely are a distinct group of fish. It's like the artist made sure to capture the eel's unique features when creating Pupus, and it really makes him stand out as a character. So, when people look at Pupus, people can instantly tell he's got that eel vibe going on, which adds an interesting twist to his appearance in the story.

5 Conclusion

"Kiko and Friends" is a special adaptation that brings the comic "Kisah si Kiko" to life, originally found in a children's magazine. In this enchanting world, Kiko and Friends take us to an imaginary underwater realm. Here, fish undergo incredible transformations, becoming human-like mutants with the ability to speak and think. These transformations occur due to the harmful effects of toxic waste and pollution in their environment.

When we delve into the analysis of personification and anthropomorphic theory within the "Kiko and Friends" animation, we discover a treasure trove of subtle yet captivating examples. One of the most remarkable aspects is the discreet personification, where aquatic creatures are given human qualities. For instance, Kiko embodies the spirit of a goldfish, while Ting-ting takes on the characteristics of a crab, and Pupus channels the essence of an eel. These transformations help viewers connect with these characters on a deeper level, despite their aquatic origins.

The exploration of personification theory in the "Kiko and Friends" series proves to be an invaluable resource for animators and designers. It serves as an exemplary case study for creating characters by blending human and animal traits, a concept known as discreet personification. Additionally, this theory also provides valuable insights into crafting costumes and attributes for these characters, giving them animal-like features that contribute to their symbolic and anthropomorphic personification. In essence, it's not just a visual treat but also a learning experience that enriches the art of character design in the world of animation.

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