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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **A Stylo-Linguistic Analysis of Syntactic Complexity and Narrative Coherence in Kenyan Motorsport Commentary during the 2024 Safari Rally**

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**| ABSTRACT**

The study explores the linguistic processes of motorsport commentary of the 2024 Safari Rally in Kenya, paying attention to the syntax complexity and narrative integrity as the key characteristics of spoken sports language. Based on Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2014), the study will examine how commentators negotiate the challenges of telling stories under real-time pressure, combining technical accuracy and appeal to the audience. A qualitative research design was utilized, and purposive and stratified sampling was executed to identify 60-minute live broadcast commentary segments on radio (KBC), television (TNT Sports), and online streaming (WRC+). These clips were selected depending on race intensity, commentator experience, and linguistic diversity. Audio recordings were used as a method of data collection, as well as orthographic transcriptions of the data with ELAN software, and contextual metadata (race stage, driver position, crowd reactions). Lexical density, syntactic variation (clause coordination/subordination, verb-argument constructions), and narrative strategies (temporal sequencing, thematic repetition) were investigated using qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis. Important discoveries indicate that commentators dynamically switch between simple exclamations and highly complex subordinate structures to reflect the race dynamics, and syntactic complexity is used to achieve clarity and dramatic impact. It was sustained by discourse markers (e.g., "Suddenly," "Meanwhile") and theme framing, which would commonly employ nationalistic or heroic motives. The commentary was in multiple languages, mixing English, Swahili, and local dialects, which offered a better cultural fit but necessitated an efficient code-switching strategy to maintain its intelligibility. The study contributes to African linguistics in sports because it puts motorsport commentary in the context of a stylistically rich genre formed by sociocultural and ideological processes. It also finds out gendered linguistic patterns where both male and female drivers were constructed using ideologically loaded lexicons. The drawbacks are genre-specific data restraints and a lack of L1 background controls. In subsequent studies, examining the longitudinal tendency, cross-cultural distinctions, and commentary systems powered by AI will be interesting. This study highlights the importance of the spoken commentary as a perspective through which sociolinguistic processes can be interpreted in multilingual communities by reflecting the gap between linguistic theory and media practice.

**| KEYWORDS**

Motorsport commentary; syntactic complexity; narrative coherence; Kenyan English; Critical Stylistics; multilingualism

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### **1. Introduction**

Motorsport commentary is a vibrant and understudied field in spoken discourse analysis, especially within the African linguistic setting. Motorsport has a special cultural and historical meaning in Kenya, mainly because of the Safari Rally, one of the most challenging competitions in the World Rally Championship (WRC). The rally has been much more than a sporting event since the beginning; it is a national event that brings together audiences of all linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, thanks to live commentary on radio, television, and, more and more, digital.

Motorsport commentary requires a high level of linguistic dexterity, and the commentators need to provide coverage and express fast and unpredictable actions. However, simultaneously, the narrative and syntax must be held together. The study provided is a stylo-linguistic analysis of the live motorsport commentary at the 2024 Safari Rally, with attention given to the two main linguistic features: syntactic complexity and narrative coherence. These are essential in analyzing how the commentators handle real-time storytelling under pressure, and how their word choices affect the audience's comprehension level and emotional appeal.

Syntactic complexity is the syntactic complexity of sentences, which is commonly indexed as mean length of clause (MLC), clauses per sentence (C/S), and verb-argument constructions (VACs) (Lu & Ai, 2015; Biber & Gray, 2010). The syntactic variation is crucial in sports commentary as it allows for reflecting the race's rhythm and intensity, switching between short exclamations and complex subordinate constructions. Meanwhile, narrative coherence ensures that the narrative created during the race is still understandable and temporally coherent to the listeners. However, live reporting is fragmented (Adler et al., 2018).

Despite its communicative and performative significance, motorsport commentary has not been studied in African linguistics. Although the present study shares research similarities with the study by Ndegwa (2015) that discussed football commentary in the Kenyan media and that by Kuiken and Vedder (2019) on the general syntactic pattern of academic writing, there has been a conspicuous lack of research on spoken motorsport commentary in multilingual contexts, such as those in Kenya.

This study fills this gap using audio tapes and written transcriptions of the 2024 Safari Rally live feeds. The study, which was undertaken with the help of Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2014) as a theory, evaluates how linguistic decisions can demonstrate both professional experience and sociocultural identity. It also explores how code-switching among English, Swahili, and local languages is used to manipulate the accessibility of the narration and the emotional appeal.

This study can therefore add to the rising body of knowledge in sports discourse linguistics, providing an in-depth analysis of Kenyan motorsport commentary through syntactic complexity and narrative coherence. It also provides a basis for future comparative studies with other African nations and other cultures of motorsport across the world.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The interpretation of motorsport commentary in Kenya, mainly the 2024 Safari Rally, was based on Critical Stylistics theory developed by Jeffries (2014), which provided a sound platform for analyzing how language constitutes meaning, ideology, and identity in media discourse. This theoretical orientation took the perspectives of both stylistics and critical discourse analysis to present not on what was being said but how it was being said, focusing on the ideological connotations of linguistic decisions. Here, the syntactic intricacy and narrative unity were not simply the descriptive aspects of speaking, but they served as the signs of professional knowledge, cultural locationality, and communal attention.

Jeffries (2014) provided a list of analytical tools called toolkits that enable researchers to reveal textual meanings on various levels- contextual, interpersonal, and ideological. Such toolkits are:

1. Foregrounding: Defining some unusual or conspicuous elements of the language that attract attention.
2. Transitivity: Examination of the verb processes to expose the representation of the actions and participants.
3. Implicature and Assumption: Exploring presuppositions and implicatures, determining how a reader interprets.
4. Evaluation: Examining how the value judgments have been represented on the lexical and grammatical levels.
5. Representation of Speech and Thought: The analysis of text mediation of voices and perspectives.

The tools were invaluable in the analysis of live sports commentary, where the language was used to describe action in real-time and simultaneously create the narratives that the audiences could hear through multiple platforms - radio, television, and online streaming. According to Kusunza (2025), commentators have to pursue technical accuracy and general accessibility, and they may vary their syntactic constructions according to the medium and intended audience.

Another essential feature of Critical Stylistics is that it emphasizes the textual meaning-making as an ideological process. Language is not a mirror of reality, but it makes reality. This was the case in motorsport commentating because how races were written about, who was mentioned in the coverage, and how events were arranged in the order in which they occur, as well as the language structures used, all went towards forming the opinions of the populace towards drivers, teams, and even nationalities. As an example, the heroic framing and nationalistic themes were found in Kusunza (2025); they are not neutral terms but ideological formations that support specific values and identities.

### **2.1 Integrating Syntactic Complexity into the Framework**

Syntactic complexity (Lu & Ai, 2015) is a term that denotes the structural complexity of sentences, which is usually evaluated through indices, including mean length of clause (MLC), clauses per sentence (C/S), and verb-argument constructions (VACs). These measures are quite common in research on academic writing and second language acquisition (Housen et al., 2018; Kuiken & Vedder, 2019), where the syntactic development has been used to indicate linguistic competency and cognitive maturity.

However, there was an alternative role of syntactic complexity in oral commentary. In contrast to the sign of formal learning, it is a test of the capacity of the commentator to operate the real-time information processing in the environment of high pressure. Spoken narratives need dynamic manipulation of simple and complex structures to ensure they can remain clear and reflect the intensity of the events as they happen (Adler et al., 2018). In motorsport commentary, succinct cries ("He is sliding!"), can be interspersed with more complex subordinate structures ("As Ogier enters the hairpin bend, he lets off the go-pedal a bit and then goes into full power in the middle of the curve"). These were used to keep up with the dynamics of the race and kept the narrative flowing.

This is in line with the developmental model of syntactic progression by Norris and Ortega (2009), who postulated that learners follow a developmental pattern which is coordination (starting point), subordination (at the intermediate stage), and phrasal complexity (advanced stage). Even though this model was initially used to explain written L2 production, it offered a convenient pattern to interpret oral commentary, in which syntactic variation worked as a means of communication and performance. This model was further narrowed down to five stages of development in syntactic complexity by Biber et al. (2011) and includes such stages as finite dependent clauses, nonfinite structures, and phrasal elaboration.

According to Kusunza (2025), syntactic complexity was analyzed through several dimensions:

- Sentence types and functional adaptation
- Discourse markers and temporal sequencing
- Use of passive and active voice
- Repetition, ellipsis, and parallelism

Each feature contributed to constructing a coherent narrative that sustained audience engagement and conveyed race information effectively. For example, repetition ("Tanak again, Tanak again — can he hold off Neuville?") reinforced key moments, while ellipsis ("Into the final stage — can he make it?") mimicked the fragmented nature of real-time racing. Parallelism ("Fastest through the corners, smoothest on the straights") enhanced rhythm and memorability (Kusunza, 2025).

### **2.2 Understanding Narrative Coherence Through Discourse Theory**

According to Reese et al. (2011), narrative coherence has three key elements: temporal detail, psychological context, and meaning/interpretation. Temporal detail makes the flow of the actions understandable and explainable, psychological context gives us an idea of the motivations and feelings of the actors, and meaning/interpretation allows the narrator to provide events with meaning.

Narrative coherence played a vital role in motorsport commentary to enable understanding of rapidly moving, erratic action. Whereas written accounts can be revised to be made clear, live commentary has to build coherence as it goes along. This involved clever deployment of discourse markers ("Now", "Meanwhile", "Suddenly"), cause and effect logic ("because he braked late, he lost control") and theme repetition ("Mechanical resilience has been a constant to this rally - Ogier tire change in Naivasha, Tanak suspension repair in Elementaita").

Adler et al. (2018) note narrative structure as part of coherence, and mention that stories are made more intelligible by following familiar patterns like Freytag's Pyramid (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, denouement). Although motorsport commentary does not necessarily follow such linear patterns, it is common to find the same kind of dramatic arc in use: tension, climax (e.g., overtaking maneuver), resolution in result or conclusion.

Also, Herman and Vervaeck (2019) pay attention to focalization, which is the aspect of narrative coherence, i.e., the point of view used to introduce events. In motorsport commentary, the focalization may alternate between drivers, teams, and spectators, making the commentary multi-perspective and reflecting the complexity of the race itself. This was in line with the results in

football commentary (Kioko, 2019), in which various focalizations contributed to the viewer engagement and emotional investment.

### **2.3 Sociolinguistic Dimensions and Multilingual Commentary**

The ability to speak to different audiences is a distinctive aspect of motorsport commentary in Kenya since it is multilingual and helps to incorporate English, Swahili, and local dialects. This multicultural language use affects the syntactic depth and the narrative flow of comments, where commentators need to use code switching in a more strategic way to make their words more accessible without appearing unprofessional.

Research findings on football reporting in the Kenyan newspapers (Ndegwa, 2015) indicated that code-switching helps make it relatable and humorous. However, it can also be ambiguous unless used with caution. Code-switching has two functions in motorsport commentary: to support national identity and guarantee a consistent use of technical terms across languages. An example would be the use of the phrase "Kila kitu kimeharibika hapa" (Swahili translation of "everything has gone wrong here") followed by a more elaborate explanation of mechanical failure in English.

Sociolinguistically, this was a sign of larger movements in African media, in which multilingualism was no longer merely a functional need but a cultural resource. Nonetheless, as Jeffries (2014) cautions, the media's language is never neutral regarding ideology. The choice of languages or dialects may indicate inclusiveness or exclusiveness, power or familiarity, about the target audience and the setting.

## **3. Methodology**

This study has used a qualitative research design to examine the syntactic complexity and narrative coherence in motorsport commentary in the 2024 Safari Rally in Kenya. Based on concepts of Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2014) and discourse analysis, the approach centered on the use of language in real-time broadcasting across several media: radio, television, online streaming, and press.

This study was executed in three broad stages: data collection, transcription, annotation, and qualitative content and discourse analysis. The audio recording and transcriptions of the live commentary segments were the key data collected based on their representativeness concerning the race intensity, the experience of the commentators, and the diversity of the languages used.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The textual research design was used, which aimed at naturally occurring spoken texts but not the experimental or elicited data (Keats, 2009). This strategy corresponded with the research that analyzed real-life discourse practices in sports media (Rawian et al., 2023). The design was inspired by the necessity to record natural interactions of commentaries in high-pressure environments where the commentators must balance technical correctness and audience appeal.

### **3.2 Area of Study and Population of Study**

The research was done on the 2024 Safari Rally, which was to be organized in various terrains of Kenya, including Nairobi and Naivasha. The reason that made these places the choice was the importance of these places as broadcast centers and their status as a multilingual practice of commentary that involves English, Swahili, and the local dialects.

Professional motorsport commentators on different media platforms comprised the target population. The stratified sampling method was applied to provide the representation based on gender, the number of years of experience, and the broadcasting medium (Kusunza, 2025).

### **3.3 Sampling Procedure**

Purposive sampling criteria were used to select excerpts of commentaries to contain:

- Intense moments of the race (e.g., maneuver of passing, mechanical breakdown)
- Various commentator personalities (men/women, experienced/inexperienced)
- Multiple media channels (radio, TV, Internet)

Of 30 hours of recorded commentaries, 60-minute segments were picked out to analyze thoroughly. Each segment's syntactic variation, lexical density, and narrative structure were examined.

### **3.4 Instruments of data collection**

The instruments used to collect data include:

1. Audio: Digital recorders were used to record the live broadcasts and were downloaded on official broadcasting websites.
2. Transcriptions: To make speech and text temporally consistent, ELAN software was used to transcribe audio files orthographically.
3. Contextual Notes: The metadata, like race stage and the driver's position, as well as crowd reactions, were recorded to facilitate contextual interpretation.

### **3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Discourse and qualitative content analysis were used to study the linguistic aspect of the commentary. The content analysis aimed at finding out repetitive syntactical patterns, whereas discourse analysis aimed at discovering how these patterns operated in the broader context of communication.

To determine syntactic complexity, several measures were utilized:

- Mean Length of Utterance (MLU)
- Clauses to Sentence (C/S)
- Adverbial clauses, relative clauses, and complement clauses
- VAC frequency (Lu & Ai, 2015)

They are based on research on second language acquisition (Kuiken & Vedder, 2019; Norris & Ortega, 2009), which showed its usefulness in measuring developmental patterns of written and spoken syntax.

The analysis was based on the model Reese et al. (2011) provided to create the narrative coherence, which had three distinguished components: temporal detail, psychological context, and meaning/interpretation. Qualitative evaluation of close reading and coding was done to determine to what degree commentators offered temporal qualifiers, motivation explanations, and thematic meaning to events.

Also, Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2014) helped identify ideological positioning in the selection of comments. Namely, the foregrounding, evaluation, and focalization toolkits were used to study the frames of drivers, teams, and national identities introduced by commentators.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability**

As a way of improving reliability and minimizing subjectivity, methodological triangulation was used by:

- Two researchers were independent coders
- Inter-coder agreement checks
- Peer debriefing with motorsport journalists who have a long experience

Its validity was attributed to the fact that it cross-checked its findings with previous literature on sports commentary (Kioko, 2019) and consistency in the analytical processes.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Several ethical considerations were made in the study. The researcher sought necessary approvals from the supervisors, the Chair of the Department, and NACOSTI. All data sources were duly acknowledged. A similarity index report for integrity and intellectual honesty was attached to the thesis as part of the postgraduate requirements. This research was conducted within proper ethical parameters. Since the study involved public commentaries and broadcasts, all sources of commentary were acknowledged correctly.

## **4. Analysis and Discussion**

Motor sports commentary represents an exceptional oral communication with high emotions and technical accuracy. The study explores the syntactic complexity and narrative coherence of motorsport commentary as used in the 2024 Safari Rally in Kenya, which is informed by theoretical and methodological perspectives on the research applied in studies of second language writing, spoken sports commentary, and critical stylistics.

Qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis methods were used to analyze naturally occurring spoken texts taken from live broadcasts on radio (KBC), television (TNT Sports), and online streaming (WRC+). The linguistic attributes covered are lexical

density, syntactic variation, clause structure, and narrative progression, which all go towards how commentators can cope with real-time storytelling under pressure.

This section shows the most important findings as described in the literature, including Lu and Ai (2015), Kuiken & Vedder (2019), Adler et al. (2018), and Jeffries (2014), as follows:

1. Lexical Density and Technological Sludge
2. Sentence Structure Variation and Syntactic Complexity
3. The use of discourse markers and time sequencing achieves coherence in narration.
4. Comparisons of the Other Genres of Spoken Commentary

Each theme is presented, citing the particular examples of recorded commentary and framed in terms of the wider tendencies in the study of spoken discourse.

#### **4.1 Lexical Density and Technical Jargon**

Another characteristic of motorsport commentary is the heavy use of rally racing technical terminology. Terms like handbrake turn, gravel trap, WRC+, power slide, and championship contender were repeated constantly by commentators to deliver accurate data about the state of the races, driver actions, and cars.

This is consistent with what Lu and Ai (2015) did on syntactic complexity in L2 writing, where lexical density tends to serve as a proxy of language proficiency and expertise in a given field. As he was dealing with written academic literacy, the same process can be applied to verbal commentary, where the particular language is used to inform knowledgeable viewers and provide the viewers with a clear demarcation between professional commentary and casual talking.

Technical terms in motorsport broadcasting are used as a sublanguage (Kusunza, 2025) with a very narrow register. Commentators have found a middle ground between employing this sublanguage to be authentic and being able to be understood by average audiences. As it is in the commentary of football (Kioko, 2019), this has been done with the help of paraphrasing techniques, contextual descriptions, and metalinguistic remarks like this one: "For those of you who have never been to a rally, what he has just done is..."

These strategies indicated that, much as lexical density was high, it was not at the expense of clarity. Instead, it increased the credibility and expertise of the commentator and their status as narrator and teacher.

#### **4.2 Syntactic Complexity and Sentence Structure Variation**

Some of the indices used in measuring syntactic complexity include mean length of utterance (MLU), clauses per sentence (C/S), and frequency of verb-argument constructions (VACs) (Lu & Ai, 2015). Such measures have been used extensively in academic writing and second language acquisition research, where syntactic development is identified to indicate linguistic maturity.

The purpose of syntactic complexity is slightly different in spoken commentary: it indicates how well the commentator can cope with processing information in real time in a high-stress situation. According to Adler et al. (2018), oral narratives necessitate the movement of simple and complex structures to ensure that the narration is transparent yet reflective of the level of events as they unfold.

Commentators in our data also often switched between short exclamations ("He is sliding!") and more complex subordinate constructions such as "As Ogier gets to the hairpin bend, he is easing off the throttle slightly then giving full power in the middle of the corner".

This trend confirms the developmental model of syntax proposed by Norris and Ortega (2009) that maintain that speakers will progress to different levels of syntactic development where speakers transform their use of syntax which starts with coordination (level 1), followed by subordination (level 2) and finally to phrasal complexity (level 3). Even though this model was initially designed to analyze a second language's written production, it can be used to analyze spoken commentary, where syntactic variation has communicative and performative purposes.

Moreover, Biber et al. (2011) distinguished levels of development of syntactic complexity: from dependent finite clauses, to nonfinite constructions, and phrasal elaborations. These phases can be seen in motorsport commentary as the commentators alter their syntax according to the situation's urgency. For instance:

- **Coordination:** "Ogier and Tanak are ahead of the game, following each other."

- **Subordination:** As expected, Ogier never lost grip but stayed in control.
- **Elaboration of phrases:** "Being an incredible car controller, Ogier was able to take control of the traction before going into the last stretch."

Such syntactic decisions added clarity, rhythm, and dramatic tension, which are a part of the performative quality of commentary.

#### **4.3 Narrative Coherence Through Discourse Markers and Temporal Sequencing**

Narrative coherence is the sequential process of speech or written work events. Reese et al. (2011) described narrative coherence as consisting of three primary elements: temporal detail, psychological context, and meaning/interpretation. These elements in motorsport commentary are needed to form a picture of high-velocity and chaotic activity.

The discourse markers were also used to lead the listeners through the time of the race. The frequently used markers were:

- **Temporal:** Now, Meanwhile, Suddenly, Next up, At this point
- **Contrastive:** however, on the one hand, unlike previously
- **Additive:** Also, Plus, What more, In addition

For example:

"He is now coming round the last turn, but hold! He is losing control... Moreover, all of a sudden, Neuville passes!"

The temporal sequencing was also critical in maintaining the narrative's logic, particularly in multi-stage races like the Safari Rally. Time-based cues, like first, next, then, and finally, were used in the narration to provide structure to commentators:

"The first was that Ogier led. Then Tanak narrowed the gap. Everything is left to the last stage now."

Such approaches correlate with the model of narrative coherence elaborated by Reese et al. (2011) that focuses on the impact of time detail on story comprehensibility. Alongside the motorsport commentary, using time markers helps sequence the events and generates more suspense and emotional attachment.

Also, the recurrence of a theme was another device to maintain narrative flow. Commentators often went back to previous moments or themes in order to establish continuity and underline meaning:

"You recall what happened here last year on this bend? History is repetitive."

The method supports a psychological context by connecting the present with the past to make the listener more invested in the story. It aids ideological framing as well, especially when national pride, enduring, or heritage themes are invoked.

#### **4.4 Comparisons with Other Spoken Commentary Genres**

Motorsport commentary has much in common with other types of spoken commentary, especially in football/soccer commentary and live news reporting. Nonetheless, it can be noted that there are significant variations when it comes to the syntax construction, wording selection, and narrative rhythm.

As Kioko (2019) notes, football commentary uses repetition, ellipsis, and parallelism to emphasize important points and reproduce the game's rhythm. These features also occurred in Safari Rally motorsport commentary, but in more diverse syntactic structures because the excitement of the rally racing was unpredictable and fast.

In addition, research like Augendre et al. (2018) assumes that the genre of spoken commentary is more likely to use shorter sentences, imperative form, and direct address to keep it as close as possible to the audience. Commentaries on motorsport follow these norms, but the syntactic freedom is higher, which enables a more detailed description of mechanics and tactics.

A unique aspect of motorsport commentary is that it is multilingual, especially in Kenya, where English, Swahili, and local dialects are freely mixed. This is compared to most European and American commentary formats, which are usually monolingual. According to Ndegwa (2015), code-switching can make something more relatable and funnier, but it can also create ambiguity in the case of improper management.

Code-switching seems to have several functions in motorsport commentary:

- **Cultural resonance:** Local flavor is provided by such phrases as "Hapana!" (Swahili for "No way!").

- **Accent and emotions:** A language change is usually employed to create drama.
- **Inclusiveness to the audience:** In the mixed language broadcasts, the commentators use Swahili or the local languages to include the audience who may not be conversant with English.

This multilingual approach supplements the commentary and needs more mental deliberation by commentators and the audience to keep the commentary coherent.

## 5. Findings

The language study of motorsport commentary in the 2024 Safari Rally has demonstrated a diverse interaction between syntax complexity, narrative coherence, and sociolinguistic dynamics. Commentators proved to be linguistically very versatile, as they began to adjust their syntax, word choice, and narrative styles to the requirements of broadcasting in real time.

The most important findings are as follows:

- A lot of technical jargon and lexical density will promote credibility and authenticity.
- Dynamic syntactic variation enables the commentators to reflect the intensity of race and be clear.
- Fast-paced environments are coherent because of discourse markers and thematic recurrence.
- There is much cultural relevance in multilingual commentary that needs to be carefully code-switched.

The above insights add to the emerging knowledge about spoken sports discourse and have good implications about what language can do to influence the perception of the masses about motorsport in Kenya and other parts of the world.

### 5.1 Limitations, Future Research Implications

Although this research provides meaningful data on the syntactic complexity and narrative coherence of motorsport commentary at the 2024 Safari Rally, it is necessary to discuss the study's limitations and consider future research.

#### 5.1.1 Study Limitations

One of the possible limitations is determined by the genre specifics of the data collected. Indeed, motorsport commentary is a specialized type of spoken language that is not similar to academic writing or non-spontaneous media. According to Wondemagegne et al. (2024), research that targets a particular genre would not necessarily generalize to other communicative contexts. Although such a focus enabled a detailed study of motorsport commentary, it restricts the generalizability of results to other forms of discourse practices that can be spoken or written.

Also, the sample size and scope were limited because the Safari Rally had only returned to the World Rally Championship (WRC) calendar a few years ago. Not many full-length broadcasts could be accurately transcribed and analyzed. Despite the attempts to account for various commentators, platforms, and race stages, a bigger corpus would improve the strength of the findings.

The other limitation is the lack of control over L1 backgrounds. According to Pallotti (2015) and Vyatkina (2013), language background may affect the syntactic structure and style when talking and writing. Possible effects of the native language background of commentators have not been explored since this study did not systematically address this aspect.

Finally, the methodology was qualitative and interpretive, but did not employ any computational aids (including automatic syntactic analyzers and machine learning-based discourse tagging systems). Using such technologies in second language writing studies has become widespread to determine such patterns on a large scale, and they may be used in the future to analyze spoken sports commentary (Lin et al., 2023).

#### 5.1.2 Implications for Future Research

The findings of this study suggest several promising avenues for further investigation:

##### I. Longitudinal Studies of Commentary Development

Longitudinal studies that monitor the transformation of motorsport commentary over time may help unveil the influence of the changing media-related technologies, viewer demands, and language conventions on commentary styles (Kusunza, 2025). This would enable researchers to determine whether syntactic complexity and narrative strategies emerge as predictable across consecutive seasons of racing or broadcasting.

##### II. Cross-Linguistic and Cross-Cultural Comparisons

The contrastive analysis of Kenyan commentary on motorsport and the Western one might reveal the differences in linguistic realization, narrative approaches, and the methods of connecting with the audience in the region. This study would fit the



demands of applied linguistics to conduct more cross-cultural studies on spoken discourse (Kuiken & Vedder, 2019; Pallotti, 2014). For example, a comparison may be made between how the commentary on English-language motorsport in Kenya will integrate Swahili and local dialects, and how British or American commentary will integrate idiomatic expressions or humor. Such comparisons might also be applied to the football/soccer commentary, which is more thoroughly investigated in African media (Kioko, 2019).

### **III. The Artificial Intelligence in Commentary Production**

New commentary systems where AI is applied in esports and virtual motorsport driving simulations provide a rare chance to examine how syntactic complexity and narrative coherence are handled by an automated system. The study examining the potential of such systems to reproduce the syntactic patterns of a human or be structurally different can play into the discussions on the authenticity of the discourse and natural language processing (Kusunza, 2025).

### **IV. Influence of medium on the linguistic style**

The effect of various media formats on syntactic decisions and storytelling may also be examined in future studies, such as radio, TV, and online streams. In the case of radio commentary, the lexical density and temporal sequencing may be particularly needed since there is no visual context. In contrast, in the case of television, syntax is more descriptive and elaborated. This coincides with findings reported in Augendre et al. (2018), where comments in televised sports commentaries were found to have platform-specific syntactic inclinations. A similar line of inquiry applied to motorsport may reveal new information about how the medium influences the spoken discourse.

### **V. Influence of Audience Demographics**

Since the Kenyan motorsport crowds are multilingual and multicultural, future research may examine to what degree commentators alter their syntactic complexity and code-switching practices based on perceived listener types. This may include experimental structures where chunks of commentary will be shown in various demographic groups to measure understanding, interest, and emotional appeal.

### **VI. Methodological Suggestions to Future Research**

Future studies may be based on the following methodological improvements in order to eliminate some of the limitations of the current study:

- **Automated Syntactic Complexity Analyzers (SCA) use**  
Such instruments as the L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer by Lu (2010) could be modified to accommodate spoken commentary corpora and allow a quantitative evaluation of the syntactic development of commentators and platforms.
- **Experimental Designs, which are Controlled**  
Scholars may organize controlled listening tests in which the auditors judge the excerpts of commentaries on clarity, excitement, and understandability, and the effects of syntax on the audience perception may be tested empirically.
- **Corpus-Based Theories**  
A whole body of motorsport commentary in various regions and languages would allow massive studies of syntactic patterns, discourse markers, and narrative development.
- **Multimodal Data Integration**  
An eye-tracking, voice stress analysis, or EEG could be combined with linguistic analysis to investigate the impact of real-time commentary on listening cognition and emotional reaction.

### **6. Conclusion**

The research has discussed the linguistic landscape of commentary in motorsport in the context of the Safari Rally 2024 in Kenya, with the idea of syntactic complexity and narrative coherence being the most telling factor of professional and audience engagement. Through a qualitative content and discourse analysis based on Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2014), this study has shown that motorsport commentators use a great deal of syntactic variation, lexical density, and narrative structuring to cope with the pressure of a real-time narrative. The results show that there is nothing fixed about syntactic complexity in motorsport commentary. However, it can dynamically change by reacting to varying levels of race intensity, platform format, and audience expectations. Commentators alternate using simple coordination and complex subordination structures, stemming from the developmental patterns identified in the study of second language writing (Lu & Ai, 2015; Norris & Ortega, 2009). These syntactic variations are necessary to reflect the rhythm of racing and do not lose clarity and dramatic tension. The story

coherence was similar to the model of narrative comprehension proposed by Reese et al. (2011), which can be attained by strategically using temporal sequencing, theme recursion, and evaluative markers. Also, the culture was made more relevant with multilingual comments that needed to be switched carefully to maintain intelligibility. Although limited in scope, this study is within the confines of genre-specific data and the absence of L1 controls. It is a welcome addition to the growing research in spoken sports discourse analysis, especially in an African linguistic environment. It also creates a basis for future comparative studies of languages, regions, and media platforms. This study demonstrates the importance of analyzing spoken discourse in any field, rather than academic or literary, by recognizing that motorsport commentary is a stylistically rich and culturally embedded genre. With the further development of live broadcasting, the concept of the influence of language on perception, identity, and emotion in real-time needs to be developed.

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