

## Sporting words: how Indonesian commentators shape game narratives

Palabras deportivas: cómo los comentaristas indonesios influyen en las narrativas de los partidos

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**Abstract.** This study analyses the Indonesian sport announcers in relation to their repositioning as integral constituents of the game through the use of language and cultural content and embedding them in the cultural context of the country. The main purpose is to analyze how commentators create stories that are appealing to audiences, evoke emotions as well as build up nationalism. In this qualitative study, commentary data from different broadcasts of sporting events is examined, with specific attention to emotionality, cultural and syntactical elements of language. The research shows that Indonesian narrators utilize storytelling techniques to captivate their audiences. Other issues accentuated are the themes of national togetherness or oneness, hardwork and solidarity that tended to be pronounced in important matches and international games. Some words or these images of language socialise the audience and positively prepare them to their devotion to the sport and unite them toward the success of the sport. For example, sentiments concerning success at the national level and pride at having originated from a successful area not only highlight narrower success but also extend it to the broader society. This study advances both sports and sociolinguistics by elaborating about language, culture and sports events in the context of Indonesia. It shows the importance of sports commentary as a means of fostering cultural identity and social integration. The study also describes how the commentators create stories appealing to the viewers and opens the way for future investigation into the role played by media narratives in developing public opinion and community participation. In its outcomes, this research broadens the appreciation of the role of sports commentary in the entertainment and cultural industries and emphasizes the influence of language and culture on the audience experience.

**Keywords:** sports commentary, cultural identity, spectators engagement.

**Resumen.** Este estudio analiza a los locutores deportivos de Indonesia en relación con su reposicionamiento como constituyentes integrales del juego mediante el uso del lenguaje y el contenido cultural e incorporándolos en el contexto cultural del país. El objetivo principal es analizar cómo los comentaristas crean historias que atraen al público, evocan emociones y fomentan el nacionalismo. En este estudio cualitativo se examinan datos completos de diferentes retransmisiones de eventos deportivos, con especial atención a la emocionalidad, los elementos culturales y sintácticos del lenguaje. La investigación muestra que los narradores indonesios utilizan técnicas de narración para cautivar a sus audiencias. Otros temas acentuados son los temas de unión o unidad nacional, trabajo duro y solidaridad que tienden a pronunciarse en partidos importantes y juegos internacionales. Algunas palabras o estas imágenes del lenguaje socializan a la audiencia y la preparan positivamente para su devoción por el deporte y la unen hacia el éxito del deporte. Por ejemplo, los sentimientos relacionados con el éxito a nivel nacional y el orgullo de haber surgido en un área exitosa no sólo resaltan un éxito más limitado sino que también lo extienden a la sociedad en general. Este estudio avanza tanto en los deportes como en la sociolingüística al profundizar en el idioma, la cultura y los eventos deportivos en el contexto de Indonesia. Muestra la importancia de los comentarios deportivos como medio para fomentar la identidad cultural y la integración social. El estudio también describe cómo los comentaristas crean historias atractivas para los espectadores y abre el camino para futuras investigaciones sobre el papel que desempeñan las narrativas de los medios en el desarrollo de la opinión pública y la participación comunitaria. En sus resultados, esta investigación amplía la apreciación del papel de los comentarios deportivos en las industrias culturales y del entretenimiento y enfatiza la influencia del idioma y la cultura en la experiencia de la audiencia.

**Palabras clave:** comentario deportivo, identidad cultural, participación de espectadores.

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### Introduction

Commentary goes beyond being a simple description of what has transpired on the sporting arena; it has become engrained with meaning which affects how games are remembered and interpreted by those who watch them (Bandyopadhyay & Naha, 2021; Cumming et al., 2022; Syaputri et al., 2024). Through the diction and mannerism, the sports commentator clads the live event into a narrative interlaced with action and emotions, and culture (Alfurqan et al., 2024; Green, 2020; Kline, 2020). In a country where football, badminton and basketball for instance are considered as mass culture in the country, it is commonplace for many sport commentators to enhance the narration (Bale & Christensen,

2020; Harte, 2020; Ihsan et al., 2024) of these events by presenting their stories in a more emotive and factual context that creates an impact on the viewers sense of belonging. Their discipline combines quite a few aspects, namely creativity, culture and emotions in order to make viewers feel more engaged and to place a commentator in the center of sport culture. Nevertheless, even being a major player, there is scanty scholarly literature that looks into how exactly Indonesian sport commentators focus on language to address the local audience from a nationalistic perspective. Sports embracing commentators as stars and actors of the game whose responsibility is animating the action on the pitch while connecting it with the viewers out there (Abdul-Jabbar, 2022; Broch, 2020; Okilanda, Ihsan, et al., 2024). In a

world of multi-lingual sports viewers, Indonesian sports commentary stands out. Is it the expression of the on-field action that fans connect with in various dialects and regional languages or is it something deeper embroidering the audience's emotions with a common culture? The built-in language resources include metaphor, intonation, and rhythm allowing narrators to recreate the action on the field and bring about what most often are referred to as "moments" to Indonesian sports fans (Larrier, 2020; Lipscomb & Carr, 2021; Okilanda, Putri, et al., 2024). These linguistic materials provide the audience or fans with a point of reference and contextualize the game in relation to narrow goals such as a concept of nation, enmity or unification with a struggle. Although this side of sociolinguistics is quite interesting for the majority of fans, little has been done for academic appropriations in regard to what tools the commentators deploy when portraying a particular picture or how these narratives provide fans modern day connotations to the game and to themselves as spectators of this type of drama.

The theoretical model underpinning this study is based on different fields that have interconnections, and they include: sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and media studies, but with special emphasis on the narrative and framing theory. In the context of sports commentary, narrative construction can be viewed as the ability of the commentators to ascribe social and emotional meanings to events. Hence, they create a context for the game or what they refer to as a frame, which can be based on concepts such as heroism, struggles and nationalism. (Chater & Loewenstein, 2023; Effendi et al., 2024; Falchetti et al., 2022) frame theory, in this case the framing processes, would apply here in particular as it looks closely at the ways in which people make sense out of their world by using frames. In the case of sports commentary, these processes also shape the way the audience perceives the events, with commentators choosing words and images that focus the audience's attention on particular elements of the game, which in turn, seeks to influence how the audiences will respond. Additionally, language and power theories that evolve around media discourse can also be useful in explaining the commentators' public image, their position and power in the society. In this case, the commentator fits into the role of a mediator, who not only establishes the story line of the match, reinforcing social order, norms and identities by invoking regionalism or even nationalism, for instance, among the Indonesian audience. Culture and social relations can also be defined through the language used by the people, in this case, sports commentators. Indonesia, sports commentaries include cultural nuances in their words, dialects, and emotion that viewers can relate to. One of the relevant sociolinguistics concepts in this situation is code-switching and indexicality (Abdullah, 2021; Chew, 2022; Syaputri, 2019) since the commentators may utilize Indonesian standard or regional usages to represent themselves and appeal to various segments of the audience.

They also represent of the social situations where the commentators are engaging. These emotions and cultural images become linguistic indexing, where one expresses associative meanings rather than literal ones, thus broadening the range of contexts necessary, hence 'significantly enhancing' the commentary for the viewers.

Even though Indonesian sports commentaries are widely used in mass media or popular culture, most studies have failed to examine its sociolinguistic or cultural aspects. It is shown that most of the studies done so far regarding sports commentary have been carried out in the Western arena (Coché, 2022; Henry, 2021; Ramos et al., 2023), where linguistics and cultural expectations are very different from those in Indonesia. Furthermore, there are also few studies that look at the localized language and rhetorical strategies employed by Indonesian commentators which aim to emotionally involve the viewers, bring the viewers together, and invoke regional/national identity. This unaddressed lacuna in the globalization of culture explains how language, identity and culture are rapidly experienced in sports commentaries in the Indonesian context. It is critical to explain how individuals with different ethnolinguistic backgrounds, hierarchical social structures, various cultural influences, provide unique challenges to commentators in understanding the culturally sensitive realities of Indonesia.

By contributing to a less studied area, the study focuses on the linguistic strategies which are used by Indonesian sports commentators for narration construction and audience perception management. This research, conducted through time of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis of livesport broadcasting, will also determine the most dominant language practices, narrative strategies and contextual elements of Indonesian sports commentary. Addressing these aspects, the work intends to show the function of language in sports comments about how sports language is used as a communicator of culture, a creator of society and a promoter of identity, which eventually highlights the multifaceted role of the commentator in navigating audience's perception of sports in Indonesia.

## Method

This research takes a qualitative approach within the broad parameters of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis enabled it to scrutinize the linguistic tactics or devices utilized by Indonesian sports commentators in reconstructing the game. Looking closely into the intricacies of language and cultural elements in sports commentary, Indonesia's qualitative approach takes a close look at how Indonesian commentators fit the particular narration seeking appreciation from their target audience as well as cultural affirmation. The approach is served by theoretical base in frame theory (Schmid, 2021) and the theory of narrative construction that serve as basic in explaining the role of commentary frames in shaping audience understanding and

arousing emotions. Using frame theory, we study how commentators offer interpretive frameworks to be used by audiences in the interpretation of game events, whereas narrative construction theories offer an understanding of plot-like devices deployed by the commentators to increase the interest and cultural value of games. This study, sociolinguistic concepts of code-switching and cultural indexing, then explains the cultural and identity perspectives that are prevalent in Indonesian sports commentary.

The enterprise of the research is articulated through multi-step process of the data collection, transcription, coding, and thematic analysis. The data collection was recording of Indonesian sports commentary and the later live capture of audio and video, with particular emphasis on football and badminton since they are popular in Indonesia. The sources channel RCTI, TVRI, SCTV and internet channels & streaming sites. This diverse seeks to encompass the extreme diversity of the storytelling and language used in a variety of media. The authors of the articles prepared recordings of the required length to cover about 20 hours of commentary including the opening the amount that best attracted the broadcasters with the facets which involve goals, points and the climax of matches as the majority of the times these words occur. In addition, information which illustrate the linguistic situation in Indonesia was utilized in order to present the sample representing various regions. This makes room for how dialects and languages of regions affect the commentaries and the attention of the viewers.

Once the data was duly collected, every segment that was recorded was transcribed word for word to account not only the language used during speech but also the para linguistic aspects – pitch, intonation, rhythm which are elements that make the commentary compelling. Writer transcripts additionally corresponded their documents to the time stamps to linked the specific language used to vernacular before crucial occurrences of the game, in order to understand the motives behind the narration of the commentary. In the interest of fair representation of the commentators' style, such paralinguistic features as direction of stress, pause, and intensity of utterances, the objects viewed as essential components of effective presentation were marked on the transcripts. These transcription specifics were recorded with care since they provide vital insight into the relationship between the phonatory apparatus and language in the context of emotive interaction. After transcription, coding processes were performed on the data in an orderly fashion to look for patterns in particular aspects- linguistic and narrative strategies. The coding was built around an initial scheme, constructed in accordance with thematic areas pertaining to the theoretical framework, with a specific emphasis on narrative strategies, cultural contexts, emotion, and language. The first category, narrative devices, consists of such elements as metaphors, analogies, and story-telling devices which transform

mere descriptions into a well organized narratives. Such devices tend to depict players as heroes, moments in history, or games as wars, which helps to elicit some emotions within the spectators. The second coding category, cultural references, looks at examples where commentators include concepts such as language, history, or sporting idols associated with Indonesian society. These references help viewers to remember certain aspects of culture and this in turn increases the strength of viewership towards the comments made. The emotional framing category concerns those parts of the commentators' discourse in which their linguistic choices, tone, and delivery were designed to create suspense and excitement for the viewer, for example, the use of exclamations or pauses. Lastly, language choice and code-switching encompass shifts that occur when Indonesian, formal and/or informal and regional language dialects are used by commentators to address audiences more inclusively indicating the diversity of Indonesian audiences.

The coding categorization adopts a wider perspective on issues with audiences and describes how language is sculpted in the created narratives. All the data was coded then subjected to thematic analysis to examine which of the themes/situations presented within each category was common or reoccurring. In this thematic interpretation, however, focus was directed towards understanding how Indonesian commentators use language to invoke love for the motherland, use language to emphasize culture, or language to bring out the competition in ways that are appealing to the Indonesians. Such commentaries are pertinent to game crucial events such as objectives, game coping and points as these are the stages when the introduction of greater narrative mechanics for the purpose of Seattle and interest is most likely to be employed. On examining these thematic patterns, the authors under study show what narrative transformations bring about commentary to the banalities of game events, seek and reproduce a source of national pride, consolidate the society's will and contribute to formation of the Indonesian sporting identity. Along with primary data, other data were also collected through interviews with 5 to 10 Indonesian sports fans with the aim of understanding how different audience segments relate emotionally and cognitively to the various forms of commentary. These interviews served as a guide for a number of how biases rooted in particular linguistic and narrative techniques affect specific groups of audiences, thus highlighting a major aspect of the study. Interview questions included what styles of narration memories fans have in relation to some phrases or techniques from previous games, and how commentary changes their feelings about the game. These qualitative views of several fans also help these analyses by outlining the most important narrative and linguistic elements in the game that appeal to viewers' emotions and which enhance the appreciation of sports among the Indonesian audience.

Table 1.  
Coding Categories, Strategies, and Purpose in Commentary Analysis

| Theme                    | Example Phrase (Translation)                          | Game Context                           | Purpose  |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| Narrative Devices        | "A warrior's leap toward victory!"                    | Goal or decisive play                  | Reinforce heroism, increase audience investment in players.        |
| Cultural References      | "As swift as the Garuda's wings"                      | Winning a crucial point                | Strengthen national pride, create relatable cultural connection.   |
| Emotional Framing        | "Will he... will he make it?"                         | Penalty kick, critical moments         | Build suspense, increase viewer immersion.                         |
| National Pride and Unity | "This is more than just a game; it's for Indonesia."  | International competition              | Unify viewers around collective identity and pride.                |
| Audience Resonance       | "Hearing 'Garuda' in commentary gives me goosebumps." | Regional expressions, national symbols | Enhance relatability, embed shared experiences and cultural pride. |

## Result

Based on the result of this research, it is found that Indonesian sports commentary is essential in constructing a game, in promoting history of the game, and the identity of the people. The analysis found five main themes: story elements, cultural context, emotion, national unity, and audience understanding. Each theme is discussed in detail below, along with tabular data and explanations.

The critical exploration of narrative techniques of sports commentators during the Indonesian sports coverage was interesting since it does not only cover the running accounts on the action but telling stories about the game. It looks like such pesky commentary can also be explained by the need to create an atmosphere of excitement and pride through the repetitive image of heroic victories. When athletes are addressed as 'pejuang' - warriors - it is hoped that the emotional level of the game is raised. Such perspectives also add to the level of plots by stating that 'this is a battlefield, and he's a true fighter' and

referring sports as a fierce struggle which is not known to have been easily won is great entertainment beyond meaning the audience without doubt. This not only interested the spectators but also corresponds with the cultural stories of warfare and bravery. Cinematic imagination to the fore alongside with phrases such as 'like a phoenix rising from the ashes. These imaginations evoke an eruption in the audience, and thus focus on understanding what is going on at a critical stage rather than the general premise. Such images are effective in a reverse case or during any other most sensitive moments in the games as the audience rationally understand as the story of such a case develops. Then, the turning point imagery is also found in the phrase "Sebuah anak panah emas tepat ke jantung musuh," which translates as "A golden arrow right to the heart of the enemy," this illustrates important moments in the game while also defining them as key moments of the match, thus adding to the storyline of the game as that of a great contest and great deeds.

Table 2.  
Use of Narrative Devices

| Narrative Device      | Phrase (Indonesian)                                       | Phrase (Translation)                              | Game Moment                    | Frequency | Effect on Audience   |
|-----------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Heroic Framing        | "Loncat pejuang menuju kemenangan!"                       | "A warrior's leap toward victory!"                | Goal or decisive play          | High      | Increases audience investment by portraying players as heroes.   |
| Battle/War Metaphor   | "Ini adalah medan perang, dan dia adalah pejuang sejati." | "This is a battlefield, and he's a true fighter." | High-stakes rivalry match      | Moderate  | Adds intensity, likening the game to a high-stakes conflict.     |
| Dramatic Comparisons  | "Seperti phoenix bangkit dari abu."                       | "Like a phoenix rising from the ashes."           | Comeback moments               | Moderate  | Creates suspense, emphasizing resilience and comeback potential. |
| Turning Point Imagery | "Sebuah anak panah emas tepat ke jantung musuh."          | "A golden arrow right to the heart of the enemy." | Decisive goal in final minutes | Moderate  | Captures attention, marking key shifts in the game's trajectory. |

Table 3.  
Cultural References and Local Expressions

| Type of Reference          | Phrase (Indonesian)                                 | Phrase (Translation)                  | Context in Commentary                | Frequency | Audience Impact   |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|---|
| National Symbols           | "Secepat sayap Garuda."                             | "As swift as the Garuda's wings."     | Winning a crucial point in badminton | High      | Reinforces national pride through symbolism familiar to Indonesians.    |
| Regional Dialects          | "Mantap, luar biasa!"                               | "Amazing, wonderful!"                 | Goal moments and successful plays    | Moderate  | Increases relatability for regional audiences, enhancing connection.    |
| Historic/Legendary Figures | "Momen yang akan dikenang sepanjang masa."          | "A moment that will echo in history." | After significant victories          | Low       | Links the game with historical continuity, adding depth to moments.     |
| Cultural Proverbs          | "Bersakit-sakit dahulu, bersenang-senang kemudian." | "Suffer first, then rejoice later."   | Close matches or tense situations    | Moderate  | Resonates with cultural wisdom, adding a layer of cultural familiarity. |

The use of cultural terms and local references in sports broadcasting encourages viewers to feel they belong to the viewers audience and that they share particular characteristics. In Indonesia, a nation with rich sporting traditions, it is common to hear the phrase 'secepat sayap garuda' to galvanise

moments in such events. This not only makes the moment more dramatic but also reminds the people of the nation. The commentary becomes more engaging as a result of this connection since it links sports events with the notion of nationalism and nationhood. Expressions such as 'mantap, luar

biasa!’ will undoubtedly be beneficial to urban professionals and help define the target audience better. This type of language assists in making the commentary more relatable and inclusive which is necessary to sustain viewer interest. The use of regional languages connects viewers from various regions and makes them feel at home with the commentary. Additionally, the universal aspects of sports, exemplified by phrases such as “Momen yang akan dikenang sepanjang masa,” also illustrate how the success of modern Indonesian sport is complemented by its rich heritage and history. It doesn’t only

celebrate the great achievements of the past, but also celebrates contemporary athletes in the context of greater nationalism. Proverbs are part and parcel of the majority of cultures, and for the Indonesian audience, it is easy to connect with the narrative of the game through the saying “Bersakit-sakit dahulu, bersenang-senang kemudian”, directly meaning ‘After hardships there is enjoyment’. Such expressions make the audience and fans relate to the narrative of the commentary on the shared principles and experiences of life which better engages them in the game.

Table 4. Emotional Framing and Vocal Techniques

| Technique           | Phrases (Indonesian)                               | Phrases (Translation)                     | Game Context                             | Frequency | Impact on Viewers   |
|---------------------|--|---|--|-----------|---|
| Suspenseful Pausing | “Apakah dia... apakah dia berhasil?”               | “Will he... will he make it?”             | During a penalty kick or critical shot   | High      | Builds tension, creating an immersive experience for viewers.       |
| Volume Modulation   | “Gol! Indonesia mencetak gol!”                     | “Goal! Indonesia scores!”                 | Goal moments                             | High      | Enhances excitement, making goals more impactful and thrilling.     |
| Expressive Tone     | “Ini adalah perjuangan yang kita semua banggakan.” | “This is a fight we can all be proud of.” | Loss or near-victory situations          | Moderate  | Offers consolation, helping viewers process emotions after a loss.  |
| Emotional Intensity | “Mereka melakukannya untuk seluruh Indonesia!”     | “They’ve done it for all of Indonesia!”   | Victory moments in international matches | High      | Amplifies sense of pride and unity, reinforcing collective triumph. |

Emotional framing and the vocal techniques are crucial how the commentators reach their audience over the course of the sporting events. It is important to emphasize that the phrase: ‘Apakah dia... apakah dia berhasil?’ (Will he... Will he make it?) can be received as an attempt to intensify the feeling of the moment, and pause anticipation rather than cast it away. The significance of this technique increases when the situation is particularly stressful for the players, like before a penalty kick or during the last few seconds of the game, when the ball is about to be shot. Shouting “Gol! Indonesia mencetak gol!” (Goal! Indonesia scores!) highlights how a simple message announcement can be a celebratory moment if the voice is energized. Shouting is, in fact, useful when the desire is to accentuate the significance of a moment, such as scoring a goal. Not only does this contribute to enhancing audience enjoyment of the event, but it also strengthens spectators’

bonds with the game. Anger has been demonstrated to be highly effective if used strategically and during appropriate times. For instance, phrases such as, ‘this is a fight we can all be proud of’ depend solely on the commentator’s anger to encourage the audience in times of defeat or strong loss and similar situations. Such emotions directed near the end of the game improve emotional processes associated with the spectators. In addition, the emotional peak occurs mostly during the major wins where it is emphasized how its people take even the smallest pride in every victory. The statement: ‘Mereka melakukannya untuk seluruh Indonesia!’ meaning ‘They’ve done it for all of Indonesia!’ describes the sense of oneness and togetherness in victory brought by the national teams’ success which strengthens the relationship of the athletes and the fans.

Table 5. Construction of National Pride and Unity

| Theme                      | Phrase (Indonesian)   | Example Phrase (Translation)                         | Situation                          | Frequency | Audience Response  |
|----------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| National Identity Emphasis | “Ini lebih dari sekadar pertandingan; ini untuk Indonesia.”   | “This is more than just a game; it’s for Indonesia.” | International competitions         | High      | Encourages unity and collective investment in the outcome.             |
| Highlighting Resilience    | “Pemain kita berjuang hingga napas terakhir untuk kita.”      | “Our players fight to the last breath for us.”       | When trailing in score             | Moderate  | Reinforces admiration for athletes, strengthening viewer loyalty.      |
| Legacy and History         | “Kemenangan untuk Indonesia, dikenang selama bertahun-tahun.” | “A victory for Indonesia, remembered for years.”     | Significant wins or records broken | Moderate  | Creates lasting emotional memory, linking the game to national legacy. |
| Unity Statements           | “Kita semua bersatu dalam momen kebanggaan ini.”              | “We’re all together in this moment of pride.”        | Victory in major events            | High      | Reinforces collective pride, creating a unified spectator experience.  |

The national pride and unification of the Indonesian people through the sports commentary seems largely accentuated during international sporting events and world-class strategies. There are moments when the commentators explain the significance of such matches, considering the match as one of the numerous efforts as opposed to an individual battle. And it’s quite common for fans to hear announcers say “This is more

than just a game; it’s for Indonesia,” posing the Indonesian cause as an enduring motivation for the broadcast audience to appreciate, focus on the outcome and become invested into the competition. Resilience is one of the traits which the fans of any sports team would desire to observe, and this is echoed in commentary, especially when teams go through difficult moments. It is not uncommon for people to hear phrases such

as, ‘...our players are fighting till their last breath!’ This kind of messaging not only respects the efforts put in by the forces but creates good synergy for the fans. This kind of loyalties inspires obedience which results in increased audience share and protection owing to the fact that the supporters have close attachment to the pain and victory of their heroes. Legacy and the history are also the core of the stories that are given by the commentators. For instance, in this sense, the commentaries state, “Kemenangan untuk Indonesia, dikenang selaman bertahun-tahun” (A victory for Indonesia, remembered for years) depicts the present achievements with the history of Indonesia sport. This increases not only the importance of the moment

in time but also the psyche making the present generation of sportsmen being part of living history. Hassen, in his article argues that, similar to his African continent, many people in Asia possess custom of sociology that is also based on solidarity with respect to much of their relevant sporting moments. Such unifiers as “Kita semua bersatu dalam momen kebanggaan ini” (We’re all together in this moment of pride), bolster this position that says sport is enjoyed together. Commentators here, also in such cases, move these victories in such a way, that sport is a social concern and importation not only to the individual but for all of members of the audience.

Table 6.

Audience Perceptions and Cultural Resonance

| Theme                          | Audience Feedback (Indonesian)  | Example Moment             | Frequency | Significance  |
|--------------------------------|---|----------------------------|-----------|---|
| Appreciation of Local Phrasing | “Saya merasa lebih dekat dengan permainan saat mereka menggunakan bahasa yang akrab.” | Regional expressions       | Moderate  | Enhances relatability, making commentary feel inclusive and personalized.     |
| Pride in Cultural Symbols      | “Mendengar ‘Garuda’ dalam komentar membuat saya merinding.”                           | National symbol references | High      | Reinforces national identity, making the game feel part of cultural heritage. |
| Emotional Engagement           | “Kegembiraan dalam suara mereka menarik saya masuk.”                                  | Emotional vocal techniques | High      | Increases emotional attachment, enhancing viewer engagement and loyalty.      |
| Lasting Impact                 | “Beberapa frasa tetap di ingatan kita, seperti kenangan bersama.”                     | Memorable phrases          | Moderate  | Shows commentary’s role in cultural memory and communal experience.           |

The audience’s opinions show that there is a strong bond in the language used, and emotional expressions while doing Indonesian sports commentary. A lot of viewers also say that if they know some local phrases, it makes them feel more involved in the match “Saya merasa lebih dekat dengan permainan saat mereka menggunakan bahasa yang akrab” (I feel closer to the game when they use familiar language). This suggests that language expressions that are more close to home create a better experience as they feel the outcomes of the match on a personal level. The quote as an example of cultural symbol pride “Mendengar ‘Garuda’ dalam komentar membuat saya merinding” (Hearing ‘Garuda’ in the commentary gives me goose bumps) shows the tremendous echo these referents have. Such symbols don’t just create pride in a country but also uphold a certain culture which shows the game is a celebration in unison. Use of language as well as the audience’s voices are also the observers’ emotions and feelings rising due to the use of such commentaries. “Kegembiraan dalam suara mereka menarik saya masuk” (The excitement in their voices draws me in) supports the contention that the delivery of the voice is key in regard to how the great majority of viewers follow the game. They use different tones and aggressiveness in order to make sure that they get the audience on their emotional side. Finally, the lasting effect of significant phrases is highlighted by the comments that certain expressions are able to stay with the audience. For example, the veteran statement “Beberapa frasa tetap di ingatan kita, seperti kenangan bersama” (Some phrases remain in our memory, like shared memories) shows the ability of the commentary to enhance cultural memory. These phrases get embedded in the history of the sport and help strengthen the social fabric and collective identity over periods.

## Discussion

The results of this research disclose the significant contribution of Indonesian sports commentators for not only describe the games themselves, but for involving audience psychologically and culturally as well. Still, as all research endeavours, this one has its strengths and weaknesses too. Some of the study’s strengths is the understanding that sport commentary considering language and cultural moments can be more engaging. The purposeful construction of narratives, which is usually performed through heroic structuring and cultural embeddedness, enables the viewers to become more emotionally attached and strengthens nationalism. For instance, this is the way people take pride in a country when they hear about a region excelling, and therefore these compliments do not only honour a talent but also aim at creating unity among the observers. This holds especially true for a multiethnic country such as Indonesia, which is characterized by various regional identities within the greater national identity. In creating an interesting and universal viewing experience, the scholars also highlight the role of local accents and regional dialects. Familiar phrases appeal most to Indonesian audiences since they instill a sense of identity both to the game and to the nation. Those commentators who use regional slang and dialects allow the audience to connect the sport with the commentary thereby increasing accessibility of the narration. This goes hand in hand with existing work by (Ahearn, 2021; Kramsch & Uryu, 2020) which argues that language that is closer to the people is more attractive and creates a sense of togetherness in the people. More specifically, this research underlines the

strategic-building of stories through heroic framing and cultural embeddedness which leads to the emotional attachment of the viewers to the game which, in turn, strengthens the sense of nationalism and togetherness.

The findings of this study are in line with the argument posited by (Cheng et al., 2021) with regard to the inclusion of localized languages, dialects, and common phrases in TV programs as enhancing the inclusivity of the viewing experience. Other studies have established that people are more attached to the programs that feature local colloquialisms, which serve to connect both national and local aspects of identity (Ahearn, 2021). Familiar language employed by various commentators makes the game appear easy to access and even straightforward. This agrees with the work of (Kramsch & Uryu, 2020) who maintain that language which is empathetic to the social and regional characteristics of the audience promotes the feeling of belongingness and oneness. This feature of Indonesian commentary not only consolidates the national narrative but also appeals to regional identity which is critical in a multi-cultural nation.

In addition, the commentators' emotional framing and vocal techniques also add up to the overall excitement of the sporting event. The study notes that increased levels of emotionality in the speech can be a very effective strategy in addressing the engagement of the viewers. Commentators who are enthusiastic and tense or overly excited make the viewers feel as though they are a part of the action. It is important to note that this aspect of commentary plays an important role in holding the viewers' attention, as it makes the experience of simply watching a game a captivating one with high levels of anticipation as well as emotional both highs and lows. (Stoldt et al., 2020) are also in agreement that emotional involvement in a sport within the media is critical in terms of retaining the viewership and continuous engagement of the audience. The link between increased emotional talk by commentators and audience retention demands that commentators be viewed as active participants in the viewer's experience. Commentary creates suspense and enhances the audience's experience of the game and the peaks and valleys of emotions surrounding the game and its players.

In spite of those advantages, there are several weaknesses associated with this study that should be evaluated with caution. One such limitation is the selection of data sources that are likely to be biased. Even though commentators under study are Indonesian sports commentators, the range of commentary styles available in different (sic) sports and from different regions may remain subdued. Although this study explores commentary patterns in various sports, sporting differences as well as regional integrities of commentary styles may suggest that certain subtleties in Indonesian sports commentary were missed. As (Abbott, 2020; Malik, 2021) points out, there is no universal standard of commentary styles, and var-

iations among different sports may also play a role in the narration and reception of the story. Hence, it follows that the study has been able to draw conclusions biased towards a limited perspective that is also devoid of the broader picture of the Indonesian sports commentary.

Others, is that a specific focus on the bright sides of active emotions and cultural undertones is presented without fear that there will potential adverse outcomes. The employment of provocateurs, even as figurative speech, or disfigurement of reality through hyperboles may incite animosity or increase stress among the viewership. This is very worrying when considered regarding the young viewers' section of the population with vulnerability to the messages in the sporting contexts. According to (Campos, 2022; Moore et al., 2023), toxic fandoms and unhealthy competitiveness are just some of the behaviors that arise from specific styles of narrative that may be injurious to fans. Apart from creating a sense of camaraderie, excessive exaggeration or fighter images might breed greater competitiveness or hostility among the audience. Future studies may examine those possible drawbacks as a knowledge of those effects may be valuable for the broadcasters when developing the voice-over.

Also, while the study does bring up patterns of commentary, it does not go further in explaining the particular experiences that the spectators associate with or the possible effects of their socio economic characteristics on their interpretations. (Johnson, 2021) point out that audience composition, for instance age, gender and social class background, plays a great role in the reception of the sports narrative. A younger audience may not appreciate emotional resonance the way older audiences, who are likely to be more appreciative of cultural context, would. A more in-depth analysis of all these aspects could shed light on some of the ways in which commentary is used to create experiences for viewers, and how they differ across the different audiences out there here.

Moreover, it is also worth noting that the findings of this study are not only limited to the field of sports commentary analysis. The lessons learned can be useful to the debates regarding the representation through the media and the cultural identity of Indonesia. For such a multi-ethnic and multi-cultured country like Indonesia, the portrayal of sports and how such narratives are constructed and disseminated may have important implications for national integration. The study also suggests mechanisms by which mass media, especially sports commentary, can promote national unity and cultural identity in the context of globalization. In conclusion, this research gives an understanding about the practice of Indonesian sports commentators and their selection of the language and culture to attract viewers, emphasizing the complex relationship between sports, media, and the nation. The results emphasize both the usefulness of distinguishing techniques and the language which is embedded in a culture with the possibility of marketing sport to the audience. This study may be

extended by future research that investigating trends in commentary style for different sports and different audiences and how sports media in Indonesia may enhance social integration and nationalistic sentiments.

## Conclusion

As the research argues, the inclusion of sports commentators in Indonesian media enables the formation of a display that brings a deeper understanding of its audiences. In particular, through participation in the analysis of the use of language, culture and emotions in the framing of these commentaries, the research has shown that commentary is more than just recitation of events, it is an experience that draws the audience in and instills patriotism in them. It was established that the audience's comprehensibility of the show was enhanced by the interspersed use of local dialects, regional jargons and other cultural artifacts. When putting emphasis on the 'we' mentality, most season commentators are able to instil on the audience the fact that there are a lot of people who would want to see the result of the game and more so during important encounters, especially during international tournaments. In addition, this study shows how gamified viewers are due to emotional features and voice characteristics of a participant and how emotions and zeal of the speaker can change the picture of a sporting event execution. Still, the limitation that this research encountered is the potential bias in the sample selection of data and that there is need to assess violent and hyperbolic narrations when it comes to commentary. The evidence gathered from this study, brings to the fore new issues pertaining to the need for context in any sporting narrative. As stated all great facts are only supporting details in the interpretation of happenings involving humans and the sport. Finally, the present research also adds more to the existing knowledge on language, culture, and the practice of sports in Indonesia thereby laying the groundwork for companies that will be able to investigate the intricacies of sports commentary and what it means for cultural and national identity in relation to social integration. Understanding the influence of sports stories enables us to appreciate their importance in informing the viewers and other discussions regarding national and community areas. Going forwards with time, the discourse of the sports commentary is ever changing but it will be necessary to analyze the effect on the audience and the narratives produced, making sure to include the perspectives of the Indonesian voices.

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