

## NARRATIVE ANALYSIS IN BAYER LEVERKUSEN'S JOURNEY TO CHAMPION YOUTUBE REVIEW VIDEO

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### Abstract

This study aims to recognize the types of narratives contained in a video that tells the story of Bayer 04 Leverkusen's journey in winning the Bundesliga title for the 2023/2024 season. The video was published through the Bundesliga's official channel on YouTube with the title "Xabi Alonso Leverkusen Road to the Champions." The approach used in this research is qualitative, focusing on identifying the narrative structure and data revealed in the video. Labov's (2001) theory served as a foundation to explain the framework of the problem to analyse how the story in the video is structured, from the introduction to the culmination of conflict and resolution, and how narrative elements such as plot, character, and atmosphere are used to form a strong narrative. The findings indicate insight into how stories about the achievements of a soccer team can be presented through visual media such as YouTube. By analysing the narrative structure and data in the videos, this research can provide a more comprehensive picture of how video makers use narrative elements to build stories that attract and captivate audiences.

**Keywords:** *Bayer Leverkusen; Bundesliga; Narrative Analysis; William Labov; Xabi Alonso*

### INTRODUCTION

Humans have tendency to tell stories in their daily life. According to (Bortolussi: 2012)), telling stories has become a basic human need. It is also a tool for understanding and interpreting the world, helping humans overcome fears and uncertainties, and giving meaning to experiences that may be difficult to explain rationally. Stories are used to pass on knowledge, values and traditions from generation to generation. As the result of the significant role it plays, storytelling has been viscous activity since the ancient civilization era (Bortolussi: 2012). This culture wonderfully does still exist in the 21st Century. Even in this high-tech era, the habit of telling stories is not vanished yet, on the contrary, the culture grows along with time (Goodson & Gill: 2013).

Between the manifestation of its growth are the media to deliver stories. In the past even since the ancient era, a direct oral method where a storyteller told stories directly in front of audiences was the most common medium to tell story followed by telling stories through written work. Nowadays, one of the most popular media to tell stories is YouTube (Buco, 2018).

YouTube is an online platform for internet users to upload and watch any kinds of video. These days, YouTube is frequently used as media to share storytelling videos. There are millions of YouTube videos that recount many kinds of stories. One of the most famous formats is the *video essay* format. This format refers to videos which use voiceover narration for the audio element and essential pictures or video clips for the visual element. One of the stories recounted on YouTube in this format is the journey of *Bayer 04 Leverkusen*, a German football club to win the *Bundesliga*, the German football league in the 2023/2024 season. The video was created by the official Bundesliga YouTube channel entitled *Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen Road to the Championship*.

A narrative is a sequence of events that are described in order to produce a clear story (Goodson & Gill: 2013). Narrative is a conversation which has clear chronological events in a meaningful manner and provides insight into other people's experiences and space. A narrative can be a tool for the speaker to present a story to have a coherent story. Knowing a narrative structure can be the way how to deliver a narrative story comprehensively. Narrative Structure is divided the narrative analysis into six

structures in order to have a comprehensive story that is going to be delivered (Labov, 2006). There is abstract, orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda. An abstract can be described as the part that gives away what the story is going to talk about. The abstract is usually placed in the first sentence of the first paragraph and is also usually compressed into one or two paragraphs. The abstract can be the attention grabber of a narrative story since it engages the listener to fully listen to what the speaker is going to say. One of the functions of the abstract is to be a clue that a narrative story will happen. The part that explains the settings, the characters, and the time frame of the story is orientation. Orientation is generally placed in the beginning, after the abstract. Although, it is normal to see the orientation of the story in other points that are necessary for the story. The function of orientation is that it creates baselines of the story so that the listener will not get lost in the story. The complication is the part where the main event of the story takes place. It pictures what are the important events that occur throughout the story. It also builds the suspense and interest of the story, which this part introduces the listener to the characters' conflicts throughout the narrative story. The function of this part is to drive the plot forward toward the climax. After the sequence complication, completion of the series of events must occur to complete the narrative. The part which completes the complication is called evaluation. The function of evaluation is that it can provide some insight into the narrator's mind and thoughts. Resolution serves as the outcome of the complications of the story. The resolution also provides a sense of completeness by tying everything up and clarifying any remaining doubts in the narrative. One of the functions of resolution is that it gives satisfaction to the listener because this part is the point where all the conflicts of the story have come to an end. Coda is the part that shifts from the story to the current times. The coda indicates that the narrative of the story has ended which reflects the story to the present era. The function of the coda is to bring a sense of completeness to the whole narrative and make the audience understand what the whole meaning of a story is.

Some previous studies have been conducted which related to this study. In a study entitled *A Narrative Structure Analysis of Alice Sebold's The Lovely Bones* whose result study stated that the usage of narrative analysis in Sebold's *The Lovely Bones* helps to explain new meanings and concepts of rape experience which not only experiencing the horror but also how the victim regaining and resurfacing (Ahmad: 2023). Another study was conducted entitled *The Application of Labov's Sociolinguistic Model of Narrative Analysis to a Short Story The Lottery By Shirley Jackson* found that narrative analysis helped to enhance the understanding of the text by highlighting the author's narrative and linguistic technique (Rashid Sheikh et al.,: 2021). The other study was written entitled *An Application of Labov's Narrative Structure in Jhumpa Lahiri's A Choice of Accommodations* (Sathya & Barathi, 2022) and found that the application of Labov's theory helped the readers and the students to do in depth research in short story. Then, the entitled *Investigating Labov's Narrative Structure Application to the Qur'anic Narrative of Joseph's Story: Potiphar's Wife's Plot Against Joseph* (B'aanoon et al., 2023) found that narrative analysis can help to identify the interconnection between the verses and the surah (Surah Yusuf). In another study of narrative components expansion, it was found that there were micro structures as in the element of discourse e.g. the choice of words coexisted with the macro structures that are the abstract, orientation, and so on. (Iqbal et al., 2019). Lastly, the differences between factual and fictional narratives in spoken communication was studied in the content of communication between parents and children in a family (Fioretti et al., 2019).

The study's similarity can be seen in the main theory and the method approach. The studies mentioned above used the narrative analysis theory as the main theory and descriptive analysis as the approach of method for the studies (Labov: 2001). However, the difference between these studies is the objects. One study analysed a novel, other analysed a short story, and even one of the stories in the Holy Qur'an, none of them has a narration video as the object. This research aims to dissect the video using the narrative analysis approach, a framework provided by William Labov to study the content, function, and structure of a story (Labov: 2001).

The writers' goal in performing this narrative analysis is to advance knowledge about how sports narratives can be written so that they have a profound emotional impact on viewers and serve as both inspiration and amusement. The journey of Bayer Leverkusen, as seen in the movie, is evidence of the lasting power of a skillfully written sports story. Labov formulated a narrative framework

comprising orientation, complicating action, resolution, evaluation, and coda, serving as a foundational model for understanding narrative coherence. This structured approach aids researchers in identifying key elements within narratives for analytical purposes. The structure is also a guide for researchers to help them know what to examine from a story.

The problem that this research attempts to analyse is the suitability between the narrative structure of the video to Labov's narrative structure. The result describes the quality and style of the video creator in narrating the story. This study is designed to make a ground-breaking contribution to the field of linguistics by examining an underexplored object of analysis. Unlike existing research, which predominantly focuses on spoken or written data, this study will investigate video as a multimedia object. Specifically, it will analyse sports video essays which are less common as research objects. This novel focus is expected to enrich the field of linguistics by introducing innovative perspectives in the narrative analysis.

## METHOD

This research applies qualitative research principle and narrative analysis approaches to provide a descriptive profile of the object from narrative perspective. This approach enables the object to be viewed as a work of story that has a beginning, ending, and fluctuating plot in between rather than just a work of review. The data of this research is gathered from a YouTube video entitled *Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen Road to the Championship* that is posted by the official Youtube channel of Bundesliga. The video is mainly filled with voice-over narration that tells the journey of Bayer Leverkusen from the beginning of the season until they became league champion at the end of the season, some match comments of several matches by the commentators, and a few interviews over Bayer Leverkusen coach, players, and opponent coach.

Initially, the raw transcription of the video that is generated automatically and provided by YouTube is copied. It covers the main voice-over narration, match commentators' comments, and interviews. However, this transcript is certainly less accurate. There are a number of Bundesliga terms, football clubs, and players' names that are mistranscription, for instance, *Leverkusen* is transcribed *Lusen*, *Bay Arena* is transcribed *By Arena*, *RB Leipzig* is transcribed *RB leig*, *Boniface* is transcribed *Body*, *Frimpong* is transcribed *Frong*, *Freiburg* is transcribed *Fryborg*, *Die Werkself* is transcribed *the versel*, and *hinrunden* is transcribed *hin dunda*. Here, the listening process began. We must reconcile the audio and the transcription. The process of finding the incompatibility is impossible to do without researchers' general knowledge of the topic.

This research focuses on analysing the narrative structure of the object referring to concept which mentioned that a narration consists of the following elements: abstract, orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda (Labov, 2001).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This narrative analysis research over *Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen Road to the Championship* has generated several results that will be summed up into three sections.

### Narrative Structure

#### Abstract

[00.01] *They have done it for the first time*

[00.06] *In an exhilarating season*

[00.08] *The quality of football is jaw-dropping*

[00.12] *With many highs*

[00.16] *And few lows. They really have done it. They've made history all with scintillating football, a brilliant coach, and incredible team spirit.*

Abstract gives a summary to provide a brief depiction of what the story is about. In this case, the abstract says that the story is about Bayer Leverkusen's fantastic exhilarating first time winning the *Bundesliga*. It also says the story recounts struggles and glories during their journey to win Bundesliga. The winning

is such a big history and a result of the perfect combination between a brilliant coach and incredible team spirit.

#### *Orientation*

[00.28] *Bayer Leverkusen have done it.*

[00.35] *The Journey Begins on the 19th of August 2023 the first match day a home game in the soldout Bay Arena the opponents one of the big boys straight away super Cup winners and title hopefuls RB Leipzig,*

Orientation introduces the involved figures or parties, place, time, and situation of the story. Here, some of the involved parties are introduced as Bayer Leverkusen, the main party or mainfigure and RB Leipzig, Bayer Leverkusen's opponent. One of the settings of time takes place on the 19th of August 2023 in Bay Arena, Bayer Leverkusen's home stadium. The situation or activity is a football match.

#### *Complication*

Complication can be defined as a series of events within a story. Here, there are 13 complications or events.

[00.35] *... a home game in the soldout Bay Arena ...*

[02.34] *Hello everyone. Welcome to Munich ...*

[03.58] *... on Match Day nine against Freiburg.*

[05.35] *... a quick comeback at home against Dortmund*

[06.06] *... the last game of the Hinrunden Leverkusen must grit their teeth for a long time at Augsburg.*

[07.00] *a clash ... at the Red Bull Arena.*

[08.20] *Match Day 21 showdown at the Bay Arena*

[09.37] *... missing top goal scorer Boniface through injury for months after the winter break...*

[10.04] *... the next stops are Wolfsburg*

[10.29] *Freiburg*

[10.33] *Hoffenheim*

[10.38] *And Union Berlin*

[10.46] *And then all they need is one more win*

The complication shows 12 significant matches Bayer Leverkusen has played and one important moment in minute [09.37] which is the loss of their top scorer, Victor Boniface due to injury in the middle of the season. Furthermore, the 12 matches consist of 2 matches against RB Leipzig in minute [00.35] and [07.00], 2 matches against FC Bayern München in minute [02.34] and [08.20], 2 matches against SC Freiburg in minute [03.58] and [10.29], a match against Borussia Dortmund in minute [05.35], a match against FC Augsburg in minute [06.06], a match against VfL Wolfsburg in minute [10.04], a match against TSG Hoffenheim in minute [10.33], a match against FC Union Berlin in minute [10.38], and a match against SV Werder Bremen in minute [10.46].

#### *Evaluation*

[05.50] *And Boniface*

[05.53] *... but Wirtz equalises*

[06.17] *... There's Palacios he scored in the 94th minute*

[07.10] *.....There's Jonathan Tah. oh oh yes Pierro Hincapié unmarked.*

[09.51] *Xhaka go for goal*

Evaluation can be understood as solutions for problems within a story.

#### *Resolution*

[05.50] *And Boniface*

[05.53] *... but Wirtz equalises*

[06.17] *... There's Palacios he scored in the 94th minute*

[07.10] *.....There's Jonathan Tah. oh oh yes Pierro Hincapié unmarked.*

[09.51] *Xhaka go for goal*

Resolution can be understood as solutions for problems within a story. In this case, the solutions are goals, made by Bayer Leverkusen players when they trail. During the story, the goal scorers are Victor Boniface, Florian Wirtz, Exequiel Palacios, Jonathan Tah, Pierro Hincapié and Granit Xhaka.

#### 4.1.6 Coda

[11.54] *...Bayer Leverkusen, our German champions for the first time in a historic season with 79 points after 29 games without defeat a new Bundesliga record Bayer Leverkusen have done it*

The coda is a statement that ends the story. The story of Bayer Leverkusen's journey to win the Bundesliga is closed by the statement of their total point and highlight of their unbeaten status. The completeness of all Labov's narrative structure elements within the story shows it is theoretically considered a good story. This proves that having complete elements of narrative structure has to be owned by any type of narration, not only by the traditional literature form of stories such as novels or films but also by modern informal forms such as video essays.

From the result, it can also be known that the narrator of the story has positive attitude towards Bayer Leverkusen journey. It can be seen from the use of positive adjectives such as scintillating, jaw-dropping, incredible, and brilliant. This study emphasizes how crucial a story is to sports media, especially when it comes to audience engagement and telling intricate tales. By breaking down the "Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen Road to the Championship" video's narrative structure, we can better grasp how storytelling devices are applied to produce a gripping and emotionally poignant story. The results demonstrate how well conventional narrative forms work when combined with contemporary multimedia components to draw in and hold the attention of an audience. The way that Bayer Leverkusen's remarkable journey is portrayed not only honours their accomplishments but also serves as an excellent example of how storytelling can be used in sports. The ideas presented in this study will be important for telling compelling and memorable sports stories even as media mediums change.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this narrative analysis of the YouTube video "Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen Road to the Championship" provides some important insights into the storytelling techniques used to depict Bayer Leverkusen's journey to the Bundesliga title in the 2023/2024 season. By applying Labov and Waletzky's narrative structure, we are able to dissect the video narrative into its fundamental components, including orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda. By presenting the team, important players, and coach Xabi Alonso, the video successfully establishes the scene. The purpose of this section is to provide the audience with the background information and context required to comprehend the remainder of the story. The story focuses on the obstacles and pivotal moments encountered over the season. This covers important games, injuries, and tactics the team uses. Because it creates tension and keeps the audience interested in the team's trip, the detailed action is crucial. The squad players' and coaches' emotional and psychological states are revealed in the film. It gives the story more dimension by illuminating their desires, anxieties, and motivations. These assessments are effectively communicated with the use of commentary and interviews. The team's achievement of the Bundesliga title as the consequence of their combined efforts serves as the story's conclusion. In addition to bringing the story to a close, this section emphasizes the satisfaction and success that come from conquering difficulties. The story's conclusion



ties the tale to the present by discussing the significance of the win and its effects on the team and the supporters. The conclusion makes sure that everyone in the audience is aware of the broader ramifications of the team's success.

Both visual and aural components are heavily utilized in the video to strengthen the story. A thorough picture of the team's journey is given through the utilization of interview material, behind-the-scenes videos, and match footage. Throughout the video, background music and comments give emotional weight and keep viewers interested. Although this research offers insightful information, it is not without limitations. The analysis is predicated on a single video, which might not fully depict the narrative strategies employed in sports media or the entirety of Bayer Leverkusen's season. Furthermore, errors in the automated captions present additional difficulties for the transcribing process, necessitating manual rectification that may still contain errors. By comparing narration approaches across several movies from different teams or seasons, future research could expand on this subject. Furthermore, a deeper analysis of how viewers react to and interact with these kinds of videos may shed further light on the potency of narrative techniques in sports media. Investigating how various visual and aural components affect viewers' perception may also be helpful.

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