A Cross-Circle Study of Syntactic Complexity in English Newspaper Editorials from Pakistan, America, and China

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Abstract

This study investigates the syntactic complexity of newspaper editorials across three World Englishes: American English (Inner Circle), Pakistani English (Outer Circle), and Chinese English (Expanding Circle). A corpus of newspaper editorials from three varieties was formed from Pakistani newspaper 'The Dawn', America's newspaper 'Post Editorial Board', and China's newspaper 'China daily'. The total number of words in the corpus were 1,766 as it was a study at micro-level. To explore the syntactic complexity the corpus tool named *L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer (L2SCA)* was used, this tool identifies syntactic production units and syntactic complexity indices in terms of sentence structure, clause embedding, and phrasal elaboration. Results revealed clear cross-circle differences: American English exhibited the highest syntactic complexity with longer sentences, greater clause embedding, and more dependent and complex T-units; Pakistani English showed moderate complexity with balanced use of clausal and phrasal structures; and Chinese English demonstrated lower clausal complexity but higher phrasal and coordinative elaboration, favoring nominal expansion and coordination. These findings highlight the influence of sociolinguistic context on syntactic choices and underscore distinct structural preferences across Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle Englishes. The study contributes to World Englishes scholarship, offers insights into persuasive editorial discourse, and informs English language teaching, journalism, and computational text analysis. Future research is recommended to expand the corpus, include additional English varieties, integrate qualitative analysis, and examine other linguistic features to further explore global syntactic variation.

Keywords: Syntactic Complexity, L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer (L2SCA), Sentence Structure, Clause Embeddings, Phrasal Structures

Introduction

Media plays a crucial role in shaping the way people interpret and understand day-to-day affairs (Malik et al., 2023). Newspapers, which provide valuable social services, are arguably the most powerful media serving as a social marketplace for the dissemination of various ideas, beliefs, and social ideologies. They not only report daily happenings but also shape public opinion (Shahid et al., 2021). Abdollahzadeh (2007) characterizes newspapers as forms of socio-cultural practices, whereby the authors of the newspapers address public issues. The newspapers employ what may best be described as interdisciplinary discourse since the authors (journalists and commentators) address a large, unknown, and usually heterogeneous audience. Therefore, the discourse which newspapers publish not only informs the public but also guides

them in their interpretation of different issues, and integrates their perceptions and knowledge with respect to a particular topic.

Editorials are one of the most compelling genres of the newspaper which shape the readers' worldviews. These editorials communicate the position of the respective newspaper in relation to its political, cultural, and ideological affiliations. Editorials' authors act as the mediators to convey those affiliations and, in most cases, promote the interests of some groups (Shahid et al., 2021). By concentrating on specific matters and ignoring others, they promote a certain ideology (Shafique et al., 2019). Editorialists employ specific words to convince, influence, and perhaps even manipulate the readers' opinion to take (or not take) some action, all the while presenting their opinion as an authoritative narrative.

World Englishes

The term "World Englishes" is referred to different forms and variations of the English language spoken around the globe representing diverse regions, cultures, and contexts (Jenkins, 2015). The scope of World Englishes encompasses that the English language is not characterised by the British or American standards only but it is more multifarious and is a complex tool for communication used as a lingua franca in this technologically advanced world (B. B. Kachru, 1985). World Englishes considers the varieties of English, such as English in India, Pakistan, Australia, and others, to be important and legitimately different in their structural composition, idioms and expressions. Broadly, the term covers both native and non-native varieties of English spoken by people all around the world. This includes standard varieties such as British, American, Australian, and Canadian English, along with different varieties of English used in countries where English is not spoken as a native language, for instance, India, Nigeria, and Singapore (Jenkins, 2015). Its scope widens to include countries where English holds the status of an official language like the Philippines, South Africa, the Bahamas, and Jamaica. Such inclusivity indicates the variations of English language as a globally-recognized phenomenon considering the ever-changing nature of English in the context of various sociolinguistic settings (B. B. Kachru, 1985).

Linguistic Variation

The acknowledgement of different varieties of English as legitimate Englishes is particularly highlighted in the studies of researchers such as Braj Kachru, as he presented the most influential model termed as "Three Circles of English" model (B. B. Kachru, 1985). This model divides the variations of English into three circles: the inner circle consists of those countries where English is the first language such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia; the outer circle encompasses former British colonies where English is used as a second language like India, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Singapore; and the expanding circle include countries that use English as a foreign language such as China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Brazil. Kachru's main concern was that the countries in outer and expanding circle do not use imperfect English rather they have their own unique linguistic characteristics and structures and they should be considered as legitimate versions of the language.

Kachru's model in World Englishes

Braj Kachru's Three Circles Model of World Englishes (1985, 1992) categorises English-speaking countries into three concentric circles in terms of historical, sociolinguistic, and functional features, characteristics, and variations. The Inner Circle in the model covers those countries where English is the native language, for instance, the United States and the United Kingdom, and considered as norm-providing countries. The Outer Circle consists of countries where English has been introduced as a result of colonial history like Pakistan, India, and Nigeria, used as a second language in education, governance, and media. The Expanding Circle consists of countries where English is a foreign language, such as China, Japan, and Russia, with no historical or institutional connection to English. Kachru's model indicate the global

spread, sociolinguistic variation, and adaptation of English in different cultural and political contexts, working as a framework for examining World Englishes and cross-cultural linguistic diversity. Figure 1 shows this model and its countries with a graphical representation.

Figure 1
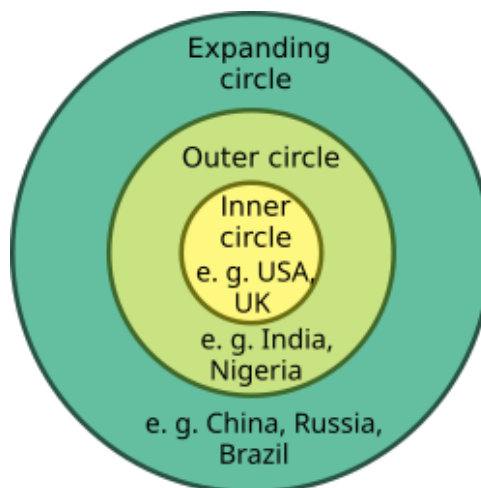
American English

American English belongs to the inner circle of Kachru' model. It is an established variety widespread around the world and is continuously expanding as a global language. It was initially originated from the British English; however, it has now become a distinct variety of English due to the influence of political, social, and cultural factors. Due to the impact of this diversity, it possesses unique linguistic characteristics and has got a prominent position in the world. The peculiar characteristics of American English include its retention of old English, creativity, and the absorption of multinational languages. Firstly, many words are used in American English that are not used in the British English such as "I guess", "fall", and "railroad". Secondly, American English has always been full of creativity having its own creative flavour. Words like 'pizzazz', 'debunk', a 'sky-scraper', 'spacewalk' and many others reveal this characteristic of American variety of English. Thirdly, As America is considered "a melting pot" accommodating a great variety of multinational people, its language is also a depiction of this diversity by including the words such as "tomahawk", and "moose" were added by the indigenous community in the North America, "cookie" and "boss" are Dutch additions. There is a myriad of such examples that represent American English as a combination of multiple varieties while maintaining its own sole identity.

Pakistani English

Pakistani English belongs to the outer circle in Kachru's model as he presents Pakistani English as an institutionalized second language variety. Pakistani English has maintained its unique cultural and linguistic position as a non-native variety of English language. Baumgardner (1993) asserts that Pakistani English variety is going through the process of localization due to the variations caused by local languages in the country such as Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, and many others. Pakistani English has a great mix of its regional languages at phonological, lexical, grammatical, morphological, and syntactic level which make it distinct from standard British English variety. Some prominent examples of variations include borrowing from Urdu language such as words like 'mehndi, payal and churi' are not in BrE, but they are used in PakE. The use of progressive aspect with habitual situations is also a distinct feature of Pakistani English variety, for instance, *"He is always feeling better." (Hanif, 2008: p. 349).*

Chinese English

China belongs to the expanding circle in Kachru's model where English is used as a foreign language. Since the introduction of the term or variety "China English" (CE) by Ge (1980), a growing interest has been seen from various scholars to investigate this unique linguistic variety. There is a consensus regarding a prominent role of CE in the emergence of global English (Deterding, 2006) as it is considered as a legitimate and local variety in China (He & Li, 2009). Some specific definitions of China English are as follows:

"[Chinese English is] a developing variety of English, which is subject to ongoing codification and normalization processes. It is based largely on the two major varieties of English, namely British and American English. It is characterized by the transfer of Chinese linguistic and cultural norms at varying levels of language, and it is used primarily by Chinese for intra- and international communication." (Xu, 2006, p. 287, cited in Xu (2008).

Another definition is *"China English is based on a standard English, expresses Chinese culture, has Chinese characteristics in lexis, sentence structure and discourse but does not show any L1 interference."* (Kirkpatrick & Xu, 2002, p. 269, cited in Eaves (2011)).

Problem Statement

The degree of syntactic complexity plays an important role to identify the functionality of language, stylistic sophistication, and discourse proficiency. However, despite increasing interest in the field of World Englishes, investigation of syntactic complexity of different English varieties remains a less-researched area particularly in the context of newspaper editorials. Standard English varieties such as British English, American English and others have been studied extensively, but the varieties in outer and expanding circles of Kachru's model show a clear gap with reference to syntactic complexity variations. This gap limits the understanding of factors that govern changes in English editorials' texts across global English varieties. Thus, a comparison of syntactic complexity in Pakistani English, American English, and Chinese English newspaper editorials is needed to probe into the linguistic variations particularly within the scope of World Englishes.

Significance of the Study

The current study holds significance due to various reasons. Firstly, it explores the syntax-level attributes of three different English varieties including Pakistani English, American English, and Chinese English in the newspaper editorials for cross-variety comparative analysis. Secondly, the findings of the study will contribute to the documentation of less-researched Pakistani English and Chinese English varieties. Thirdly, the study enhances the understanding of Kachru's Three Circles in the context of syntactic complexity, addressing the debate on the evolution, status and indigenization of Englishes. Finally, the study bridges theory and practice by informing ESL/EFL pedagogy on the specific syntactic features of newspaper discourses, which can enhance English teaching, academic writing, and curriculum development, especially in contexts with increased exposure to diverse Englishes. The study illustrates the scope of Englishes worldwide, the diversity they encapsulate, and demonstrates how sociolinguistic parameters shape the construction of language, particularly syntax.

Research Objectives

- To compare the syntactic complexity of newspaper editorials written in Pakistani English, American English, and Chinese English
- To contribute to the broader understanding of variation within World Englishes by situating syntactic complexity differences within Kachru's Three Circles framework

Research Questions

- What are the similarities and differences in the levels of syntactic complexity in Pakistani English, American English, and Chinese English newspaper editorials?

- How do the syntactic complexity patterns observed in Pakistani English, American English, and Chinese English newspaper editorials reflect their respective positions within Kachru's Three Circles of English?

Literature Review

The study by Aqsa et al. (2022) investigates journalists' ideology and Pakistani media representation as reflected in the linguistic features of headlines of Covid, Afghanistan, Facebook, harassment and Sialkot tragedy discourse. Headlines on sports, political, country and international level published in *The Dawn* and *The Express Tribune* (from August to December 2021) were used as a corpus for this study. Utilizing AntConc 3.5.8 for frequency count and Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of description, interpretation and explanation, the study identified that journalists tend to use adjectives, modal verbs and positive/negative lexical items to persuade readers as well as create an interpretative influence. Yu and Ma (2024) examined Chinese English from the corpus-based and sociolinguistic perspective on *Qiu Xiaolong's Enigma of China*, a novel with international acclaim. By analyzing keywords, the study observes language innovations at vocabulary, syntax and discourse-pragmatic levels such as hybrid lexical compounds, Chinese-like parallel sentence structures and political discourse / classical Chinese poetry integration. The results indicate that these features are a reflection of the transfer of traditional Chinese cultural norms and political ideology into English, thus demonstrating the localized and culture-bound character of Chinese English. Albrecht (2023) analyzed different features of Chinese English and presented that phonological features were the lack of vowel reduction, differences between dental and postalveolar fricatives, and vocalization of dark /l/. Variation in grammatical features included subject and object pronoun omission and variation, tense and tag variations were also apparent. Most of the discourse-pragmatic features recall transfer from Chinese language and culture, specifically in sequencing information and cultural references. Researchers also urged the investigation of Chinese varieties for their linkage to various Chinese dialects as they might be interesting sub-national variants of Chinese English. Another study by Kausar and Arshad (2024) analyses linguistic variation in Pakistani and British newspaper editorials to explore specific features of Pakistani English (PE) as a non-native variety. Applying the Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (MAT) to a sample of 100 editorials, the study investigates lexical, syntactic and persuasive patterning. The results demonstrate substantial cross-variety variation where Pakistani editorials share a formal but accessible voice and customized persuasive strategies that reflect local sociopolitical factors. Another study by Akbar and Shah (2024) explores Pakistani English from the lenses of linguistic features and sociocultural growth in relation to the local cultural and language context. Based on qualitative data elicited through open-ended questionnaires with postgraduate linguistics students, the study highlights how these features include the use of Urdu idioms, characteristic sentence structures, and repeated borrowings from regional vernaculars. The results reveal Pakistani English as a culture-dependent variety and underscore the need for integrating regional linguistic identities into ELT and language planning. Sanyal (2013) explores lexical diversity between the two variants of English spoken in America and Britain, focusing on their reciprocal influence in the context of globalization and digital culture. Although the global diffusion of English originated in British colonial power, its present dominance can be traced to economic, technological and cultural globalization specifically it is a consequence of American media and consumer culture. It has been shown that British and American English are borrowing more from each other, especially with the influence of television, Hollywood and modern information technologies, the result is a convergence in vocabulary which diminishes endogloss inter-varietal "false friends". While lexical transfer is considerable, some minor syntactic effects have also been noticed (e.g. modal auxiliary usage), thus indicating the dynamic and bi-directional character of the variation process among these two varieties.

Masroor and Ahmad (2017) assert that newspaper editorials present specific linguistic diacritics and strategies that employ rhetorical devices for convincing readers, especially when they belong to different cultures. Editorials at many other periodicals communicate their position through an order, while the facts are used to play up the case. Using a pragma-dialectical framework, their study investigated directives in 90 English editorials of two Asian newspapers (Dawn and New Straits Times) and an American paper (The New York Times), focusing on their rate, type and surrounding textual context. Findings also indicated that Dawn was more direct in giving directives, NYT involved a much-authoritarian stance, and NST adopted a timid and disengaged role-taking a critical look from the angle of cross-cultural editorial argumentation. Zhou et al. (2023) state that studies in EAP have investigated how linguistic features can facilitate rhetorical functions in academic writing, though more of that research has tended to center on lexical or phraseological features rather than on syntactic complexity (e.g., Hyland, 2008; Shin & Nation, 2008). Their article studies the rhetorical functions of syntactically complex sentences in a corpus of 300 science research article introductions from six sub-disciplines, based on an extended model of Create a Research Space (Swales 2004) and five syntactic complexity indices. Results show that syntactic complexity differs across rhetorical move-steps and disciplines; writers use diverse types of complex structures to realize different rhetorical intentions. Alamri and Alqarni (2024) examined the level of syntactic complexity variations in English research article abstracts written by native Arabic authors in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and by international writers. Their study investigated three specialized corpora containing 600 abstracts (200 from each group), the number of words was 111,645, employing Lu's (2010) L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer (L2SCA) and explored 14 syntactic complexity indices values across five categories. Findings of the study uncovered significant differences among three kinds of corpora, and international writers wrote longer and more syntactically complex sentences, especially with reference to subordination, compared to MENA authors, indicating cross-cultural variation in academic writing. Another study by Zhao & Ge (2024) provides an account of the syntactic characteristics of L2 learners and it also suggests that which types of syntactic features should these learners use while writing in academic English. The theoretical framework used for the study was Hyland's five-rhetorical move model. The sentences were checked for syntactic complexity exploring measures like global, clause-level, and phrase-level complexity. The results uncovered that expert academic writers showed a balanced use of syntactic complexity features in terms of various moves particularly in line with the rhetorical conventions of writing abstracts. In contrast, Masters' students relied more on embedded patterns, and dependent clauses for making their writing more complex syntactically.

Methodology
The methodology section covers information about research paradigm, corpus details, corpus construction, number of words in the corpus, L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer tool's overview and research method being employed in the study.

Research Paradigm
The current study adopted a quantitative research paradigm to examine the structural complexity of three languages in numeric forms. "Quantitative method involves data collection procedures that results primarily in numerical data, which is then analyzed by statistical methods" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 24).

Corpus Details
Table 1 exhibits the data analyzed in this study compiled from the editorials published in three newspapers in three different countries: Pakistan, America, and China. The links of editorials from all newspapers have been written alongside the titles, the total number of words in each editorial have also been shown in the table:

Table 1 Newspapers and Editorials' Details

No.	Country	Newspaper Name	Editorial Title
1	Pakistan	The Dawn	Going Nowhere
2	America	Post Editorial Board	Epstein emails: The Dems and their lapdogs with laptops cry Wolff again
3	China	Ma Xuejing/China Daily	From exclusion to inclusion: Establishing just and reasonable global economic governance

Corpus Construction & Number of Words

After copying the text of three editorials, it was compiled in a word format file. A small corpus was compiled consisting of 1,766 words. The word count detail of every editorial has been exhibited in table 2:

Table 2 Newspaper Editorials' Corpus Detail

No.	Newspaper Name	Word Count
1	The Dawn	483
2	Post Editorial Board	467
3	Ma Xuejing/China Daily	816
	Total	1766

Corpus Tool

To explore the intensity of syntactic complexity, the current study uses the corpus tool *L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer*. *L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer (L2SCA)* is a corpus-driven tool which has been developed to assess syntactic complexity in learners' L2 writings. Designed particularly for research in applied linguistics and second language acquisition, this tool reads written text, then automatically computes a variety of syntactic complexity measures that reflect learners' use of grammar. L2SCA calculates measures at different levels, such as length-based (e.g., mean sentence/ clause/ or T-unit length), subordination (clauses/sentence), coordination, phrasal complexity (complex nominals) and overall syntactic sophistication. These indices are also applied to study the development of writing, proficiency effect, task effects, and instructional influence in L2 writing. The tool is known for its stability, scalability and effectiveness in dealing with large learner corpora. It offers quantifiable index of syntactic complexity, and its indices can be used for both theoretical inquiry and practical assessment working as a standard tool in detailed corpus linguistic analyses and L2 writing research. The tool identifies nine categories of syntactic production units. Word count means the total number of words in the text, sentence can be defined as a group of words that conveys a complete idea, and verb phrase is defined as a group of words having a verb as a head expressing an action, event, or a state, it may include auxiliary verbs, objects, and other complements. Clause is a syntactic element having a subject and a predicate, it may work as an independent unit or a dependent unit in a sentence, T-unit is an independent clause with all dependent clauses attached to it, dependent clause is the one that can not stand alone without main clause in a sentence, and complex T-unit is a T-unit having at least one dependent clause with its independent counterpart. Coordinate phrase is a syntactic structure in which two or more units of the same weight are joined by coordinate conjunctions (and, or, but), and complex nominal is a noun phrase extend through an adjective phrase or a prepositional phrase.

The tool identifies fourteen indices of syntactic complexity and their details are as follows:

(i) **Mean length of Sentence:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of sentences in a text with the total number of words in the text.

(ii) **Mean length of Clause:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of clauses in a text with the total number of words in the text.

(iii) **Mean length of T-Unit:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of T-unit elements in a text with the total number of words in the text.

(iv) **Clause per sentence:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of clauses in a text with the total number of sentences in the text.

(v) **Verb Phrase per unit:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of verb phrases in a text with the total number of T-units in the text.

(vi) **Clauses per T-unit:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of clauses in a text with the total number of T-units in the text.

(vii)   **Dependent Clause per Clause:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of dependent clauses in a text with the total number of clauses in the text.

(viii)   **Dependent Clause per T-unit:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of dependent clauses in a text with the total number of T-units in the text.

(ix) **T-unit per Sentence:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of T-units in a text with the total number of sentences in the text.

(x) **Complex T-unit Ratio:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of complex T-units in a text with the total number of T-units in the text.

(xi) **Coordinate Phrase per T-unit:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of coordinate phrases in a text with the total number of T-units in the text.

(xii)   **Coordinate Phrase per Clause:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of coordinate phrases in a text with the total number of clauses in the text.

(xiii)   **Complex Nominal per T-unit:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of complex nominals in a text with the total number of T-units in the text.

(xiv)   **Complex Nominal per Clause:**

It is obtained by dividing the total number of complex nominals in a text with the total number of clauses in the text.

Research Method

After compilation, an account was created on the corpus tool called *L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer* to find the syntactic structure and complexity of the text in these editorials. The tool counted the frequencies of nine constructions in the data i.e. words (W), sentences (S), verb phrase (VP), clauses (C), T-units (T), dependent clauses (DC), complex T-unit (CT), coordinate phrases (CP), and complex nominal phrases (CN). Moreover, the tool provided the syntactic complexity of a text through 14 indices encompassed around the five broad categories: 1) production units' length, (2) coordination levels, (3) subordination levels, (4) phrasal

sophistication levels, and 5) total sentence complications. The texts were copied on the free mode of tool available on the internet and the tool generated results in the bar below the text providing values for all indices. This information was copied and organized in tabular form. These results were pasted in a statistical package for further studies (Ai & Lu, 2013). The researcher used these results to look at the variances and differences in syntactic complexity of the text in three editorials.

Results and Discussion

After three editorials' data was uploaded on L2SCA corpus tool, the tool calculated the frequencies of nine syntactic production units in the corpus. Table 3 below shows these results for all nine categories:

Table 3 Syntactic Production Unit

No.	Syntactic Production Unit	American English Editorial	Pakistani English Editorial	Chinese English Editorial
1	Word Count (WC)	483	467	816
2	Sentences (S)	16	23	34
3	Verb Phrase (VP)	74	62	62
4	Clause (C)	50	41	42
5	T-unit (T)	19	25	35
6	Dependent Clause (DC)	28	15	8
7	Complex T-unit (CT)	12	9	6
8	Coordinate Phrase (CP)	4	6	18
9	Complex Nominal (CN)	62	73	113

Table 3 shows some interesting findings relevant to all three English varieties. American author used the least number of sentences, T-unit, coordinate phrases, and complex nominals: but the highest number of verb phrases, clauses, dependent clauses, and complex T-unit. With reference to Chinese English, number of sentences is the highest among all three (this can be attributed to the most number of words in Chinese editorial), T-unit, coordinate phrase, and complex nominal are also the highest among all. While in case of number of clauses and T-unit, this variety stands at the second position in the list. The least values can be seen in terms of dependent clauses, and complex T-unit at the same time being equal to Pakistani English in case of verb phrases. Pakistani English variety is not the highest in any measure. It holds the second position after American English in measures such as number of verb phrase, dependent clause, and complex T-unit. In all other measures, it is at the lowest rank when compared with other varieties of English. Summing up, the findings in Table 3 clearly reveal a distinct pattern of syntactic choices in three chosen English varieties. American English variety relies more on clausal and subordinate clausal complexity, Chinese English prefers coordination and nominal complexity, while Pakistani English variety stands at the moderate level of syntactic complexity. These cross-circle variations highlight the influence of sociolinguistic context on English newspaper editorials' syntactic choices. With respect to the values of syntactic production unit elements, American English is the most syntactically complex followed by Pakistani English and Chinese English stands at the last position.

Table 4 Syntactic Complexity Indices

No.	Syntactic Complexity Indices	American English	Pakistani English	Chinese English
1	Mean Length of Sentence (MLS)	30.1875	20.3043	24.0000
2	Mean Length of T-unit (MLT)	25.4211	18.6800	23.3143
3	Mean Length of Clause (MLC)	9.6600	11.3902	19.4286
4	Clause per Sentence (C/S)	3.1250	1.7826	1.2353

5	Verb Phrase per Unit (VP/T)	3.8947	2.4800	1.7714
6	Clause per T-Unit (C/T)	2.6316	1.6400	1.2000
7	Dependent Clause per Clause (DC/C)	0.5600	0.3659	0.1905
8	Dependent Clause per T-unit (DC/T)	1.4737	0.6000	0.2286
9	T-unit per Sentence (T/S)	1.1875	1.0870	1.0294
10	Complex T-unit Ratio (CT/T)	0.6316	0.3600	0.1714
11	Coordinate Phrase per T-Unit (CP/T)	0.2105	0.2400	0.5143
12	Coordinate Phrase per Clause (CP/C)	0.0800	0.1463	0.4286
13	Complex Nominal per T-unit (CN/T)	3.2632	2.9200	3.2286
14	Complex Nominal per Clause (CN/C)	2.6905	1.7805	2.6905

Table 4 shows the comparison of syntactic complexity indices among American English, Pakistani English, and Chinese English newspaper editorials. The results are clear that there is cross-varietal variation in sentence structure, clause embedding and phrasal elaboration. Regarding length-based scores, we can see that in American English the two metrics: MLS (Mean Length of Sentence) and MLT (Mean Length of T-unit) are highest 30.18 for MLS and 25.42 for MLT, showing a preference for sentence construction with more words and more structurally filling constructions. For both MLS (24.00) and MLT Chinese English falls in the second position, while for Pakistani English it shows the lowest values (MLS = 20.30; MLT = 18.68), indicating shorter syntactic units in comparison. When it comes to clausal complexity, American English shows the most prominent place according to Clauses per Sentence (C/S=3.12) and Clauses per T- unit (C/T=2.63). These results suggest pervasive use of clause embedding and hypotaxis. with which Pakistani English shows the moderate use of clausal complexity (C/S = 1.78; C/T = 1.64), and Chinese English with the lowest value (C/S = 1.23; C/T = 1.20) indexing low clausal subordination. Measures of subordination also illustrate these distinctions. It is in American English that the highest values are obtained for Dependent Clause per Clause (DC/C = 0.56), for Dependent Clauses per T-unit (DC/T = 1.47) and for Complex T-units, CT/T = 0.63). (17) This corroborates the preference for subordinate clause structures. In contrast to this Pakistani English's subordination is moderate (DC/C = 0.36; DC/T = 0.60; CT/T = 0.36) but Chinese English relies little on dependent clauses (DC/C=0.19; DC/T=0.23; CT/T=0.17). In contrast, phrasal and coordinative complexity is most prominent in Chinese English. It records the highest values for Coordinate Phrases per T-unit (CP/T = 0.51) and Coordinate Phrases per Clause (CP/C = 0.43), indicating a reliance on coordination rather than subordination. Pakistani English shows moderate coordination (CP/T = 0.24; CP/C = 0.15), while American English displays the lowest use of coordinate phrases. In terms of nominal complexity, figures are approximately comparable for American and Chinese English, as seen in high occurrence of Complex Nominals per T-unit (CN/T = 3.26 and 3.23 respectively) and Complex Nominals per Clause (CN/C = 2.69 respectively). Pakistani English shows relatively lower nominal complexity (CN/T = 2.92; CN/C = 1.78), and consequently reflects less phrasal compression in the NP. In general, the results demonstrate that AME is marked by the highest degree of overall syntactic complexity manifested in longer syntactic units and heavy clausal subordination. Pakistani English lies at the middle position, with moderate levels of both clausal and phrasal complexity. Although Chinese English exhibits less clausal subordination, it is high in both phrasal complexity and coordinative complexity, which also implies a tendency towards nominal expansion and coordination. These findings highlight structural

differences in the syntactic construal of Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle English in newspaper editorial discourse.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The current study investigated syntactic complexity of English newspaper editorials from three World Englishes: American English (Inner Circle), Pakistani English (Outer Circle), and Chinese English (Expanding Circle). There were clear cross-circle differences in the structure of sentences, clause embedding and phrasal elaboration as measured by syntactic production units and syntactic complexity indices. The variety of English in US editorials turned out to be the most complex syntactically, with longer sentences and T-units, as well as a greater proportion of clauses and higher frequencies of dependent clauses and complex T-units. This distribution evidences a strong tendency towards clausal subordination and hypotactic constructions. It is interesting to observe that Pakistani English exhibited moderate syntactic complexity, with mid-level values in all the measures revealing collaborative use of clausal and phrasal structures instead of subordination or coordination. Chinese English was the least complex at the clause-level, but with higher phrasal and coordinative complexity, especially with coordinate phrases and complex nominals, which could be interpreted as a preference for nominal expansion and coordination, rather than clause embedding. In general, the results highlight sociolinguistic context effect on syntactic selection in newspaper editorial discourse. Two kinds of systemic structural variants across Inner, Outer and Expanding Circle Englishes are also keyed out for clause-based complexity favored by American English; the mid-way position occupied by Pakistani English, and phrasal elaboration preferred in Chinese English. These cross-circle contrasts shed important light on the syntactic patterns distinct to world Englishes in journalistic discourse. Future studies can expand the corpus size by adding other newspapers for each country and extending the timeframe of the editorials to increase generalizability and minimize publication-specific bias. Such additional Outer Circle (e.g. India, Nigeria) and Expanding Circle (e.g., Japan, Korea) varieties would allow a wider frame of reference in comparison with global syntactic patterns. Secondly, combining qualitative linguistic analysis with quantitative measures might provide richer understanding of rhetorical strategies, editorial norms, and cultural influences on syntactic complexity. Using more than one syntactic complexity framework, e.g. Li's and Lu's analyzer or Biber's grammatical features, for instance, would facilitate cross-validation and account for more subtle syntactic variation. Lastly, other linguistic characteristics such as cohesion devices, clause-linking means, rhetorical structures, juxtapositions as well as stance markers and metadiscursive devices can be investigated to determine stylistic contrasts among three national varieties more precisely. There are several significant implications of this study. The study makes a contribution to World Englishes literature by identifying consistent syntactical differences between Inner-, Outer- and Expanding-Circle varieties that mirror local language and culture. The results reveal writing conventions and persuasive strategies, and provide an international perspective on how is persuasive discourse employed in the media. The findings also illustrate the potential of corpus-driven methods for comparative discourse studies and promote multidimensional syntactic frameworks. With respect to English language teaching, recognizing these patterns can enable learners to real world, globally spoken English for the development of genre awareness and syntactic structure knowledge. In journalism and professional writing, the findings serve to help editors tailor their choice of language for global audiences as they collaborate with localized media. Additionally, the study has implications for automatic text analysis tools by highlighting the necessity of NLP systems to consider global English diversity. Finally, the results lay a foundation for further cross-linguistic exploration by enabling comparisons of how L1 structures shape L2 writing in news media discourse.

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