Федеральное государственное бюджетное образовательное учреждение

высшего профессионального образования

Московский Государственный Лингвистический Университет

(ФГБОУ ВПО МГЛУ)

<u>Факультет гуманитарных и прикладных наук</u>

<u>Кафедра Стилистики английского языка</u>

<u>Магистерская диссертация на тему:</u>

ЛИНГВОСТИЛИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ПАРАМЕТРЫ СПОРТИВНОГО РЕПОРТАЖА НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ БРИТАНСКИХ СМИ (ИНТЕРНЕТ СМИ)

<u>Специальность:</u> Лингвистика, лингводидактика, межкультурная коммуникация

<div align="right">

Автор: <u>Мухаммадиев С.</u>

<u>Группа: 0451</u>

Научный руководитель:

<u>канд.филол.наук, проф. Голубина К.В.</u>

Рецензент:

канд.филол.наук, проф.

Салыгина Э.В

Зав.кафедрой стилистики английского языка:

 <u>канд.филол.наук, проф. Ирисханова К.В.</u>

</div>

Москва

2015

MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

FEDERAL STATE EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT FOR HIGHER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION
MOSCOW STATE LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Humanities and Applied Sciences
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STYLISTICS

MASTER'S THESIS

LINGUISTIC AND STYLISTIC PARAMETRES OF SPORTS COMMENTARIES IN BRITISH INTERNET-BASED MASS MEDIA

STUDENT:

Suhrob B. Muhammadiyev

GROUP: 0451

ACADEMIC ADVISOR:

Kseniya V. Golubina, Ph.D.,

Professor, Department of English Stylistics

REVIEWER:

Elina V. Salygina Ph.D.,

Professor, Department of English Stylistics

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STYLISTICS

Kira M. Iriskhanova, Ph.D.,

Professor, Department of English Stylistics

Moscow

2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Introduction

Sport and football in particular have always been a common form of entertainment. In the last decades, with the rise of television broadcast and with increasingly better filming technology; football has become commercialized, viewed by millions and a common "form of popular culture". [Richard 2008:193] It is presently considered by many to be the world's most popular sport. Thus, sports commentaries perform a very important function. They provide information about the game and its extralinguistic context and entertain at the same time. [Marco Balzer-Siber 2015]

Television, although nowadays a most popular medium, is certainly not the only one where sports commentary can be heard. Radio broadcasts of football matches have recently lost their popularity significantly, but are still being broadcast on a regular basis. Football matches have been covered extensively in print media, both general and specialised. More importantly, with the advent of modern technology, most print media have gone online, thus undergoing considerable change.

Among the most significant changes are changes in speed, capacity and efficiency, which opens up new possibilities for content, use and effects in online media. Moreover, another reason why print media have gone online is immediacy. For example, reports on online news websites such as The Guardian, The Daily Mail and The Times made news possible for any users around the world. According to Banerjee [2008], the Internet has different characteristics such as mass communication and message distribution, at the same time, the Internet provides greater interactivity and public participation. Millions of viewers have access to unfolding sports events via live television broadcasts or in online mode.

The aim of this thesis is to present online football commentaries (further referred to as live text commentaries) as a specific genre, to follow some of the modifications to the genre that spring from the computer-mediated nature of such reporting and to analyse their linguistic and stylistic characteristics. Our initial assumption is that online football commentaries can be regarded as a hybrid genre. They differ greatly from their print

counterparts in two ways: first, they heavily depend on the extra-linguistic events they describe and, second, they combine features of oral and written discourse, which is a direct consequence of the online mode of presentation.

In our thesis we will seek to:

- discuss sports commentaries from different perspectives;
- identify key characteristics of sports commentaries with regard to football;
- identify the impact of the Internet on traditional genres;
- examine the key characteristics and subgenres of online sport commentaries;
- investigate linguistic and stylistic features of the online football commentaries (further referred to as live text commentaries) selected for this study.

The thesis consists of five chapters: an introduction, a literature review, a methodology, an analysis, a conclusion, a bibliography and an appendix.

In the introduction the nature of the problem, the origins of the study, the focus and structure of the thesis are discussed. Our initial intuitions as to the nature of online football commentaries as a genre and their specific linguistic and stylistic characteristics are also mentioned here.

The second chapter presents an overview of the specialist literature on the subject of our research. It discusses various views on sport commentaries, the notions of the genre, register and style from various perspectives.

In this chapter, the role of the Internet in mass communication is briefly commented on. Then a detailed explanation of what a live text commentary is and why it is so specific is given. The thesis draws from many studies in the field, but most of our arguments are based on research by Crystal and Davy [1969], Ferguson [1983], Tatiana Lokshina [1984], Istrate Petru [2006], Torsten Müller [2007], Ed Turney [2008], Eva Lavric [2008], Jan Chovanic [2009], Natalia Prom [2011], Marcin Lewandowski [2012], and Barbara Johnstone [2008].

The third chapter explains the methodology of our research while the fourth chapter presents a detailed analysis of the specific features of live text football commentaries we have chosen for our research. Chapter 5 summarises the research findings, draws

conclusions from those findings, and indicates some of the implications of the findings. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research in this field are considered.

The Bibliography includes 85 titles.

The Appendix contains transcripts of 15 live text football commentaries from 2006 up to the present time.

Chapter 2

Literature review

In this chapter we will first introduce different perspectives on sports commentaries. We will exemplify the most important aspects that researchers need to consider if they choose to explore their subject using different research designs. Afterwards, we will discuss the controversy of the terms "genre" and "register' as one of our intentions is to argue that sports commentaries are a genre in their own right.

Next we will look at the impact of the Internet on traditional genres and briefly comment on the emergence of new Internet genres. Specifically, we will focus on the difference between the traditional and online sports commentaries. We will discuss in more detail their established varieties – SAT, play-by-play, or OSC, colour commentary, written sports commentary] and their characteristics partly determined by the online mode of presentation. Finally, we will look at the live text football commentary as a hybrid genre and discuss its dual oral/written nature.

2.1. Sports commentary: different perspectives

Commentaries have been explored from a variety of perspectives in different languages. We will focus on the studies by English, Russian and European scholars. From a linguistic perspective, the term *commentary* is generally understood as "a spoken account of events which are actually taking place" [Crystal / Davy 1969: 125]. However, this is a rather broad definition that can apply to multiple linguistic activities. In such a situation, perhaps a more fitting term *sportscasting* can be used, already adapted in this particular context by Ferguson [1983]. He describes *sportscasting* as an oral reporting of an ongoing sporting activity, combined with colour commentary. Colour commentary is a vital and requisite part of the genre and thus cannot be omitted in its definition. There is a variety of views on sport commentary upholding these approaches will be described in more detail in the following sections.

First and foremost, *sportscasting* is a "monolog or a dialog-on-stage" that is aimed at an "unknown, unseen, heterogeneous audience" [Ferguson 1983: 150], who is listening to it voluntarily and even though they do not provide the sportscaster with a reaction of any sort, the fact that the speech is directed at them makes them a clear part of the discourse. Sport commentators have to deal with the unfolding events on the pitch linguistically without hesitation. The nature of sports commentaries and the unusual linguistic setting is what makes the language used in the commentaries so specific. Sport announcer's talk (SAT) is one of the key characteristics of a commentary. It is the sportscaster's duty to report that makes SAT unique. His duty is to supply the audience with the information about what is happening on the pitch. This reporting has to correspond with the actual events that are happening in real time and since football is a relatively fast sport, the task is often not easy.

One of the first investigations of sports announcer talk dates back to the early 1980s, when more fans had to rely on radio broadcasts and when the idea of a worldwide web was still in its infancy. Charles A. Ferguson characterizes the language of sportscasting in his 1983 article "Sport Announcer Talk: Syntactic Aspects of Register Variation." He initially clarifies that not only the lexicon differs from other programs, but also phonological features can serve as a means of differentiation. However, Ferguson decided to focus mainly on syntactic variables, as the title suggests [Ibid:153]. In an effort to characterize the register SAT, Ferguson and his students analyzed two texts of British sportscast on football and broadcasting [Ibid: 154]. Instead of providing a taxonomy or a label for the variety, Ferguson attempts to locate the register first by searching for relevant situational and functional factors. As these variables emerge, the correlation with the linguistic behavior is tested and their distinct relationship further refined [Ibid:155).

Ferguson defines sportscasting as "the oral reporting of an ongoing activity, combined with provision of background information and interpretation" [Ibid:156]. Moreover, the second approximation specifies that SAT is either a monologue or a dialogue and that it is directed towards an unknown audience of voluntary listeners who can neither see the plays nor respond to the reporting. In the final step, the author acknowledges the shared knowledge and values between announcers and audience, which

lead to certain conventions, such as technical jargon or references of time and space, like the previously addressed anchor points. He also points out that mutual expectations vary according to the sport and its popularity [Ibid:157]. Ferguson focuses on six syntactic variables: simplification, inversions, result expressions, heavy modifiers, tense usage, and linguistic routines. The first these, simplification, includes the omission of the sentence-initial noun phrase (NP), the NP and the linking verb, as well as post-nominal linking verb. The feature has long been known from other genres of both spoken and written English as prosiopesis. It serves parenthetical expressions and various other registers, for instance the language of headlines. In sum, its main purpose is to characterize the situation as "nonleisurely, informal, exciting and vignette" [Ibid:158]. In addition, prosiopesis may simply be a process of "erosion of less stressed elements of recurrent formulas." Simplification follows relatively rigid patterns. The deleted elements are easily recoverable, since they are limited and, as mentioned above, resemble constructions of preexisting genres. Besides the linking verb, the indefinite article will be dropped as well, unless the subsequent NP is preceded by a nominal or adjectival modifier. Moreover, the omission of the linking verb mostly occurs in sentence-initial position and mainly after a one-word subject, which can be a proper noun or a common one, referencing the player or team [Ibid:159]. Ferguson underlines that he observed many instances of gerund-participials after linking verb deletion, which again reminds him of the forms more commonly used in the language of headlines and captions [Ibid:160]. Though they share an emphatic character, the communicative function attributed to them differs from one variety to the other.

The author also notes that, despite the similarities in English, "headlines" is not always as congruent with SAT in other languages. Inversions constitute the second class of forms whose high frequency contrasts with spoken English [Ibid]. In SAT the postposed subject is usually a player's name while the preposed predicate is a locative expression or a gerund-participial. The verb connecting the elements is regularly the linking verb, but may also be a verb of motion [Ibid:161]. Green suggests that the discourse function of inversions has to do with the time constraints of announcing [Ibid: 585]. As the action is more readily accessible than the player's identity, reporters tend to describe it before they

name the agents. This lag time also benefits the viewer for whom it is usually easier to determine the anchor point through spatial reference than by means of player identification. However, it must not be forgotten that radio announcers employ inversions in the same way, so that its communicative purpose is more likely centered on the simplification of reporting. The third feature that Ferguson points out is a pair of constructions that marks final results: for + noun and to + verb [Ibid]. Usually these two prepositions are indexing a purpose, but in SAT we often find examples such as "Brady throws it for the touchdown." or "Keane with a shot to make it two to one." The forms might have arisen due to time constraints, though it is questionable if they, in fact, do save time, or if this was simply a misconception [Ibid:162]. What is safe to say is that they can be detected in the announcing of all broadcasted sports. As Ferguson observes, the variables recur frequently and must have become the norm in contrast to other possible result constructions. Similar to inversions, heavy modifiers display another feature that is rather common in written English and thus highly marked in conversational contexts [Ibid]. Through appositional NPs, nonrestrictive relative clauses or proposed adjectival constructions, sports announcers regularly add casual characterizations in conjunction with an athlete's name, based on background, performance and other facts that are worth mentioning [Ibid: 163]. As the construction is quite formal in English, the author claims that only a few people are able to use it spontaneously without training. As such, it is one of the stronger markers of SAT mastery. Ferguson also discusses announcers' tense usage [Ibid:164]. His findings, however, are relatively intuitive and it turns out that tense usage corresponds for the most part to the demands that naturally arise during play-by-play reporting and colour commentary. If a sport is dominated by short actions, Simple Present is the choice. If the reporter has to announce an event that takes time, such as a race, Present Progressive is used. Recaps require Present Perfect, on the other hand. Since the verb forms do not actually exceed their usual semantic limits, it is unlikely that there are underlying communicative functions. Finally, Ferguson considers linguistic routines: formulaic expressions or even stretches of discourse that come up repeatedly despite a wider range of options [Ibid:165]. This displays a lack of creativity and is probably owing to a general human tendency to adopt formulas and routines in order to simplify the task at

hand [Ibid:169]. In some sense the prepositional result constructions mentioned above are a form of routine, since they are predominantly selected in spite of a greater pool of choices. All routines, then, are a means of simplification as well, as the greater effort of using creative language is being avoided. Through this study, he hoped to convince his readers to rethink the scope and limits of the concept of register [Reaser 2003:304]. Moreover, Reaser questions whether his analysis might give way for a distinction between radio and TV broadcast language as two distinct subgenres. After all, he argues the reporters' responsibilities differ in both media, given that TV viewers have the additional advantage of watching the actions on the screen. In terms of spatial anchor points, for example, that means that radio announcers must employ different linguistic strategies to compensate for the lack of the audience's visual input [Ibid]. The sample Reaser uses for his research consists of two excerpts of local coverage on the college men's basketball game – North Carolina State University vs. Florida State University [Ibid:305]. As both the radio and the TV broadcast are local, the announcers are assumed to have roughly the same background knowledge and the same audience. The author transcribed the commentary and analyzed the data, focusing on four of Ferguson's variables:

subject simplification, linking verb deletion, inversion, and heavy modifiers. As Reaser [Ibid:306] collected the "analyzable utterances," he paired them with what he thought would be their communicative function, selecting from the following categories: action description, strategy, report, recap, hypothetical, evaluation, and background. The first result Reaser saw was that TV broadcast supplied only 80% of the utterances that radio reporters delivered [Ibid:307]. Again, the visual image spares TV announcers some more obvious comments, whereas radio broadcasters have to provide them. For both it is true that utterances are much shorter during live action, though the distribution of communicative functions is very similar overall. The author attributes this to the fact that he considers the same game. He also highlights that radio broadcast uses more action description while, due to the shared knowledge, TV announcers can concentrate on colour commentary in form of evaluation, background information or strategy analysis. Reports on statistics and scores, for instance, the second-most frequent communicative purpose on the radio, are usually visualized and less commented on. [Reaser 2003:308]

Furthermore, Reaser observes that radio colour commentary happens during breaks, while it is often attached to live action on TV [Ibid:309]. Live actions in radio SAT almost never include recaps or strategy statements [Ibid:310]. Only reports and evaluation can be found, which the author argues can be more easily connected to action descriptions. Before Reaser turns to subject deletion specifically, he questions the purpose that Ferguson assigns to deletion in general; that is, that it be used stylistically to sound informal or exciting [Ibid:311]. He underlines that, originally, the feature was probably what Biber calls a "functional communicative requirement" [Biber 1998:33], as it indeed shortens the utterance tremendously without compromising comprehension. From there it may have been conventionalized, possibly because of its exciting character [Reaser 2003:311]. The first result of Reaser's investigation indicates that subject deletion takes place much more frequently on the radio than on TV. Since it happens mostly during live action, Reaser assumes it to be strongly functional, thus facilitating the reporting tremendously [Ibid:312]. On TV, in contrast, the deletion is distributed evenly across play-by-play and colour commentary, which hints conventionalized behavior. Reaser hence raises the question if, besides the distinction between the SATs of radio and TV broadcasts, the individual varieties used by play-by-play announcers and colour commentary may also be viewed as subgenres. He explains that it is not clear whether bearing the same features is enough for two varieties to collapse into a genre, or if an equal distribution of communicative functions is similarly required to unite them. The boundaries between genres are not sufficiently clarified and need to be revisited. As far as linking verb absence is concerned, Reaser claims to have found the feature much more often than Ferguson, which he then uses to further vindicate the value of quantitative research [Ferguson 1998:313]. Since the variable is detectable in all game situations, it must be expected to be rather conventionalized. Yet, in some instances, there is probably still an aspect of functionality. Overall, linking verb deletion differs little between radio and TV commentary. Inversions are, as Ferguson made clear already, creating a lag time for the announcer to identify the player while focusing on the action first [Reaser 2003:314]. The total rates of inversions are very similar for TV and radio broadcasts. Since they are also prevalent in low paced sports where their functionality must be

questioned, the author suggests that they started off fulfilling a communicative function and then spread by convention. Reaser points out that subregisters quite often adopt non-functional features symbolically by the larger register they are part of – to signal membership and belonging [Ibid:315]. Having blamed Ferguson's qualitative approach for his low number of a linking verb deletions, Reaser now criticizes Green for her overestimation of inversions. Again he uses this to promote his quantitative efforts, which cannot deceive the researcher in terms of frequencies. Last but not least, the heavy modifiers were expected by Ferguson to be more frequent in football, since there would be more time in between plays to add incidental background information. The results display, however, that more announcing time does not correlate with the occurrence of heavy modifiers, which were virtually absent on TV. Reaser speculates that "television announcers have more freedom to use more involved methods of colouring […], whereas the radio commentators are more restricted to quick and incidental colouring, of the kind afforded by heavy modifiers" [Ibid:315]. Interestingly, Reaser claims to observe more conventionalized roles in radio broadcasts, where live action reporting and colour commentary are tasks distinctly divided between the announcers [Ibid:317]. The observation will show that the conventions between TV commentators are similarly defined and responsibilities clearly demarcated. Overall, the variation of all features across play-by-play reporting and colour commentary is much greater for the radio broadcast than on TV, which suggests a higher degree of functionality in general. This makes sense since the audience's understanding hinges on the language alone, lacking the visual stimulus. All the differences between SAT on the radio and on television that were previously mentioned indicate that it makes sense to think of them as genres. Polish linguist Marcin Lewandowski has recognized the need for meaningful specification and decided to analyze Online Sports Commentary (OSC), a genre of football language different to SAT [Lewandowski Marcin 2012:65]. As Biber and Conrad emphasize the need for comparative frameworks for a successful register analysis [Biber and Conrad 2002:36], Lewandowski uses SAT and another subregister, Written Sports Commentary (WSC), as elements of comparison [2012:69]. OSC is a play-by-play report that is generally known as "liveticker" among fans. The author points out that virtually no

research has been done on the subject from a genre perspective [Ibid:65]. The reports are relatively short and are published on a minute-by-minute basis, ranging from some time before the kickoff until the end of the game. WSCs are essentially post-match reports that also include personal evaluation and commentary by the writer. Similar to OSC, research on WSC is almost nonexistent [Ibid:67]. As far as SAT is concerned, Lewandowski adds that other common features, besides those that Ferguson and Reaser discussed, are signposting devices and demonstrative pronouns. Following Reaser's suggestions, the author quantified the linguistic variables detected in eight 2010 World Cup OSCs. Excerpts of the British TV broadcasts of the same games and official post-match reports by the FIFA, UEFA and goal.com served as comparative elements. The main question Lewandowski tried to answer in his 2012 study was to what extent the relatively new genre of OSC is a hybrid of features of SAT and WSC [Ibid:67]. On the other hand, he hoped to uncover forms that neither of these two genres uses. The first similarity that arose between SAT and OSC is the abundance of present tense. Naturally, WSC makes more use of past tense, as the reports are written after the game. Just as announcers on TV, OSC writers have great time pressure to release their posts in real time – thus the tense usage. In addition, they want to create the feeling that the readers, despite their lack of visual and audio input, get the information immediately as the play unfolds, which is of course not true, given the lag time between the action and the release of the commentary. As OSC writers have less opportunity for colour commentary, since play-by-play action usually takes up their focus, it is only logical that OSC makes virtually no use of past tense [Ibid:70-71]. Simplification, that is, subject and also a linking verb deletion, are still sporadically present in OSC, but, when compared to SAT, the frequencies are considerably lower. Lewandowski claims that the use of the variable can also be explained with the immediacy of reporting [Ibid]. We need to question, however, to what extent this feature may have spread from SAT to other genres, and if it may have been conventionalized, instead of bearing a purely functional purpose. Regarding subject-verb inversion, it has been argued that it creates time for announcers to identify the players while already commenting on the play. Biber et al. add [Biber 1990:65] that it also "conveys an element of suspense and surprise." Though occurrences in OSC are lower

than in SAT, the form still materializes often enough to be significant. Lewandowski speculates that it is still used functionally to "focus the readers' attention on the field action" [Ibid:71]. Again, it may be brought into question if the usage is really truly functional or once more a product of conventionalization. Lewandowski also analyzes signposting devices, i.e. adverbials of time and space, such as here, there, still, and now [Ibid:72]. These deictic expressions have a high frequency in SAT, even though Ferguson had not yet deemed them worth writing about. Signposting adverbials are less common in OSC and nonexistent in WSC. As the author maintains, they serve to "create an impression of shared time and place" [Ibid]. DeNu criticizes the language ideology of Major League Football announcing generally and goes as far as saying that the commentary is "held hostage by the misapplication of formulaic announcing methodologies" [Denu 2012:256]. He recognizes that the dual system made up of a play-by-play announcer and a colour commentary was directly borrowed from other sports and considerably reshaped SAT. As he remarks, announcers tend to provide too many statistics and background information during live action, since there are no breaks as in other sports. They seem to dread the silence between plays and will fill it with information – a technique that is highly uncommon in traditional football announcing [Ibid:258]. Moreover, the descriptions of live action are unnaturally detailed. DeNu assumes that announcers tend to forget about the shared visual knowledge and thus resemble radio reporters in their level of intricacy [Ibid:259].

Last but not least, he laments the frequent coaching attitude of the colour commentary [Ibid]. Since the secondary announcer is usually a former player, coach, or both, he feels compelled to provide insights and advice that would be better suited during halftime or after the match. While some of these points DeNu addresses are certainly a matter of personal preference and possibly intentional, his observations are valid. Furthermore, British announcers – as much as other Europeans ones – are said to let the game speak for itself at times. A study comparing the register of American and British broadcasts of the same football games would probably reveal even more structural and linguistic differences. [Marco Balzer-Siber 2015: 11-21]

Analyzing the difference in sport reports in British quality and popular press, Tatiana Lokshina [1984] takes into consideration their stylistic, communicative and informative parametres. Besides, the researcher analyses the interplay of these aspects of sports reports in print mass media. The study explores a variety of broad textual categories underlying sports commentaries in British newspapers (e.g. brevity, informativeness, expressiveness, emotiveness, evaluative power and others). Tatiana Lokshina points out that the manifestation of the above-mentioned parameters varies according to the type of a newspaper.

In her study of the role of sports reports in society, Istrate Petru [2006] views sports reports as one of the crucial means of communication due to the development of various mass media. Thus, new technologies enhance the role of sports commentaries in mass communication. Moreover, the research conducted by Istrate Petru was related to the traditions and peculiarities of sports reports as well as the commentators' role in reporting sports event. The most important points discussed in the work were rhetorical and stylistic devices and how they conveyed the commentators' intentions.

In some studies [Kuznetsov, Tsvik, Yurovskiy 2002] commentaries are considered as a genre of journalism, conveying up-to-date information for print, radio and television about some events. As for sports commentaries, they are considered a type of monologue, which serves as an oral form of reporting for mass audience with the help of new technological means.

There has been extensive research into the dialogism of sports commentaries. Looking at sports commentaries from a journalistic perspective, Natalia Prom [2011] refers to sports commentaries in Russian and German print media as an informative type of journalism, which – through sports commentaries – communicate different types of information (facts, concepts, analysis) as the events unfold. The authors use expressive, metaphoric, idiomatic language with an ironic overtone, often to be found in headlines. The commentaries in her study are classified into pure and hybrid types depending on the quantity and quality of extra information included in the reports. N. Prom points out their entertaining and communicative effect as well as dialogism a parameter put forward by Russian linguist M. Bakhtin.

Studies of the duality model in sports commentaries are quite common today. The duality model implies having two commentators instead of one reporting the event. One is a professional sports journalist reporting the event and the other one is a guest expert commenting on it. Aaron DeNu shows the impact the duality model has had on the language ideology of US sports broadcasts. In his view, the combination of a play-by-play announcer and a colour commentary with specific responsibilities caused unnecessary detail, uninterrupted talk and a superfluous coaching attitude.

Many scholars have dealt with the above-mentioned SAT [for example Crystal / Davy 1969; Ferguson 1983; Delin 2000; Müller 2007] and established two main levels of language to be found in SAT, the play-by-play commentary (PP) and colour commentary (CC). A different terminology is often used, for instance Müller' [2007] *description* and *elaboration*. Even though there is a slight difference in their definitions, one level is always providing the audience with the information about what is happening and the other with background information, making it very similar to PP and CC.

Some scholars have even added other levels, most notably Delin's evaluation and summarizing. Nevertheless, the "description of activity and the provision of background information have been singled out as centrally important parts" of sportscaster's function [Crystal/Davy 1969:130]. The distinction between those two can most clearly be seen when there are two sportscasters commentating on a game, one being the prime (play-by-play) commentator, who speaks more and describes the events and the commentator (colour commentator, expert summarizer) who elaborates on the current topic and gives his opinions on the game.

Delin [2000] described four different functions that commentary (in football matches) performs:

1. Narrating: describing what is happening action by action;

2. Evaluating: giving opinions about play, players, teams, referee decisions etc.;

3. Elaborating: giving background information about team and player records, the ground, the crowd; speculating on motives and thoughts of the players;

4. Summarising: Giving an overview of play so far.

Delin splits these into 2 broad types. Narration consists of time-critical utterances, and make up the main body of the commentary. The other kinds of utterances tend to occur at times when there is less going on, and are of a more subjective nature. The switch between these two types is often marked by a change in the speaker. One aspect of a football commentary that is familiar to all listeners is that there are often two commentators. The main commentator is responsible for narration. They are always accompanied by an expert who generally performs the more subjective role. The expert never provides narrative, but is called upon to provide the colour commentary in quieter moments of the game, after a particularly exciting or controversial part of a game. The play-by-play commentator is however entitled to offer his opinion of the event.

Recently, sport commentaries have been increasingly viewed in terms of discourse, which adds new dimensions to the study of SAT. As Johnstone clarifies in her book *Discourse Analysis*, scholars from various fields claim to make use of this practice with very different research questions [2008]. Due to the nature of discourse, which Blommaert defines as "meaningful symbolic behavior" [2005], most experts have some background in linguistics or communication studies. After all, as language pervades our social life and influences our perceptions, the study of discourse is fruitful to many a scholarly exploration. The driving forces of discourse and communicative situations are best presented with examples, which Johnstone does throughout her book. The first component the author discusses is the relationship between discourse and what linguists like to call "the world" [Johnstone, 2008:10]. In a dynamic way, discourse comes into existence through the world, but also shapes it significantly, in turn. For example, TV announcers who have to convey spatial relations and distances on the field. They use what Brown calls anchor points [Brown 1983:44]. With these the reporter is able to give the viewers an idea of where the action is happening. Quite naturally, the use of anchor points varies across different – TV, radio or computer-mediated – modes of reporting. Broadcast productions are highly organized and follow strict formulas to guarantee success despite live coverage. In football commentary, for instance, the discourse structure requires more colouring in the first half to create the narrative of the match. In the second half, on the other hand, stretches of silence are more frequent and acceptable when announcers let the game

"speak for itself." The duality of play-by-play announcer and colour commentary changes the entire communication situation of reporting and a comparative discourse analysis with the announcing model would make for a grand study. The fourth factor Johnstone considers is prior discourse that creates expectations of future discourse [Johnstone 2008:16]. Again, football commentary follows a certain structure that has proven successful. Failure to comply with this formulaic pattern might be seen as a violation and can lead to criticism. Similarly, earlier stretches of discourse provide the foundation for later stretches, in which a brief back reference might be enough to elicit a specific idea. Such referential shortcuts are a helpful tool for announcers, whose time is very limited. Furthermore, discourse is highly interdependent with its communicative medium [Ibid:17]. Sports announcer talk on TV is supposed to represent the on-field action just enough to comfort the viewer. Too much detail and a lack of pauses, however, is perceived as onerous. Yet, on the radio, permanent commentary on the live action is needed, since the listener does not have the visual input. As a consequence, TV SAT and radio SAT turn out to be quite different subgenres. Johnstone finally considers the role of intentions and interpretations involved in the discourse [Ibid:18]. As far as SAT is concerned, one can easily think of the differences between a nationally and a locally broadcasted match, regardless of the sport. It is acceptable, if not required, that local announcers have a bias towards their team, while nationally televised productions must be presented impartially. Though essentially sharing the same structure and features, both discourses have a slightly different purpose due to the different audiences, which, in turn, modifies the linguistic behavior.

2.2   What is genre?

In the literature online sports commentaries are referred to differently, as register, genre or text type. Moreover, one of the initial assumptions made in the thesis concerns the status of live text commentaries as a hybrid genre. With this in view, some discussion of the terms deems necessary.

The terminological issue at hand is a vexing one. Although not all linguists or not all schools of thought will recognise or actively observe the distinctions between the terms "genre", "register", "text type" or "style", some consensus on these issues is possible.

The word genre comes from the French (and originally Latin) word for 'kind' or 'class'. The term is widely used in rhetoric, literary theory, media theory, and more recently linguistics, to refer to a distinctive type of 'text'. Robert Allen notes that 'for most of its 2,000 years, genre study has been primarily numerological and typological in function. That is to say, it has taken as its principal task the division of the world of literature into types and the naming of those types much as the botanist divides the realm of flora into varieties of plants'. [Allen 1989: 44]

In his paper "Genres, Registers, Text Types, Domains, And Styles: Clarifying The Concepts And Navigating A Path Through The Bnc Jungle", David YW Lee makes reference to Biber to make the following distinction between genre and text type:

> "… the former is based on external, non-linguistic, "traditional" criteria while the latter is based on the internal, linguistic characteristics of texts themselves" [Biber, 1988, pp. 70 and 170; EAGLES, 1996].

A *genre,* in his view, is defined as a category assigned on the basis of external criteria such as intended audience, purpose, and activity type, that is, it refers to a conventional, culturally recognised grouping of texts based on properties other than lexical or grammatical (co-)occurrence features, which are, instead, the internal (linguistic) criteria forming the basis of *text type* categories. Biber [1988] has this to say about external criteria:

> "Genre categories are determined on the basis of external criteria relating to the speaker's purpose and topic; they are assigned on the basis of use rather than on the basis of form". [p. 170]

Other terms often used in the literature are *register* and *style.* In his *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics,* Crystal [1991: 295] defines *register* as "a variety of language defined according to its use in social situations, e.g. a register of scientific, religious, formal English." (Presumably these are three different registers.) Interestingly, Crystal

does not include *genre* in his dictionary, and therefore does not try to define it or distinguish it from other similar/competing terms. In Crystal and Davy [1969], however, the word *style* is used in the way most other people use *register:* to refer to particular ways of using language in particular contexts.

The two terms *genre* and *register* are the most confusing, and are often used interchangeably, mainly because they overlap to some degree. One difference between the two is that *genre* tends to be associated more with the organisation of culture and social purposes around language [Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990], and is tied more closely to considerations of ideology and power, whereas *register* is associated with the organisation of situation or immediate context.

Genre, on the other hand, is more abstractly defined:

A genre is known by the meanings associated with it. In fact the term "genre" is a short form for the more elaborate phrase "genre-specific semantic potential" … Genres can vary in delicacy in the same way as contexts can. But for some given texts to belong to one specific genre, their structure should be some possible realisation of a given GSP Generic Structure Potential. It follows that texts belonging to the same genre can vary in their structure; the one respect in which they cannot vary without consequence to their genre-allocation is the obligatory elements and dispositions of the GSP. [Halliday and Hasan, 1985, p. 108]

These are rather theory-specific conceptualisations of *genre,* and are therefore a little opaque to those not familiar with systemic-functional grammar. Ferguson [Ferguson 1994], on the other hand, offers a less theory-specific discussion. However, he is rather vague, and talks about (and around) the differences between the two terms while never actually defining them precisely. He seems to regard *register* as a "communicative situation that recurs regularly in a society" (p. 20) and *genre* as a "message type that recurs regularly in a community" (p. 21). In any case, Ferguson also seems to equate *sublanguage* with *register* (p. 20) and offers many examples of *registers* (e.g., cookbook recipes, stock market reports, regional weather forecasts) and *genres* (e.g., chat, debate, conversation, recipe, obituary, scientific textbook writing) without actually saying why any of the registers cannot also be thought of as genres or vice versa.

Coming back to the systemic-functional approach, it will be noted that even among subscribers to the "genre-based" approach in language pedagogy [Cope and Kalantzis, 1993], opinions differ on the definition and meaning of *genre*. For J. R. Martin, as we have seen, genre is above and beyond register, whereas for Gunther Kress, *genre* is only one part of what constitutes his notion of *register* (a superordinate term).

Those familiar with Kress' work in critical discourse analysis [Kress and Hodge 1979] should not be surprised to learn, however, that in his approach to *genre* the focus is instead:

> … on the structural features of the *specific social occasion* in which the text has been produced these as giving rise to particular configurations of linguistic factors in the text which are realisations of, or reflect, these *social relations and structures* [,…e.g.] who has the *power* to initiate turns and to complete them, and how *relations of power* are realised linguistically. In this approach "genre" is a term for only a part of textual structuring, namely the part which has to do with the structuring effect on text of sets of *complex social relations* between consumers and producers of texts. [all italics added] (p. 33)

In this thesis the term *genre* will be used as texts are viewed as members of a category. Genres are categories established by consensus within a culture and hence subject to change as generic conventions are contested/challenged and revised, perceptibly or imperceptibly, over time.

It has been observed that texts often exhibit the conventions of more than one genre. John Hartley notes that 'the same text can belong to different genres in different countries or times' [O'Sullivan et al. 1994:129]. Hybrid genres abound (at least outside theoretical frameworks). Van Leeuwen suggests that the multiple purposes of journalism often lead to generically heterogeneous texts [cited in Fairclough 1995:88]. Norman Fairclough suggests that mixed-genre texts are far from uncommon in the mass media [Fairclough 1995:89]. Some media may encourage more generic diversity: Nicholas Abercrombie notes that since 'television comes at the audience as a flow of programmes, all with different generic conventions, means that it is more difficult to sustain the purity of the genre in the viewing experience' [Abercrombie 1996:45]. Furthermore, in any

medium the generic classification of certain texts may be uncertain or subject to dispute. One may acknowledge the dynamic fluidity of genres without positing the final demise of genre as an interpretive framework. As the generic corpus ceaselessly expands, genres (and the relationships between them) change over time; the conventions of each genre shift, new genres and sub-genres emerge and others are "discontinued". Tzvetan Todorov argued that "a new genre is always the transformation of one or several old genres" [cited in Swales 1990:36]. Each new work within a genre has the potential to influence changes within the genre or perhaps the emergence of new sub-genres (which may later blossom into fully-fledged genres). However, such a perspective tends to highlight the role of authorial experimentation in changing genres and their conventions, whereas it is important to recognize not only the social nature of text production but especially the role of economic and technological factors as well as changing audience preferences. The interaction between genres and media can be seen as one of the forces which contributes to changing genres. Genres are not simply features of texts, but are mediating frameworks between texts, makers and interpreters. Fowler argues that 'genre makes possible the communication of content' [Fowler 1989: 215]. Certainly the assignment of a text to a genre influences how the text is read. Genre constrains the possible ways in which a text is interpreted, guiding readers of a text towards a preferred reading (which is normally in accordance with the dominant ideology) - though this is not to suggest that readers are prevented from 'reading against the grain' [Fiske 1987: 114, 117; Feuer 1992: 144; Buckingham 1993: 136]. Genres can be seen as involved in the construction of their readers. John Fiske sees genre as 'a means of constructing both the audience and the reading subject'. [Fiske 1987, 114]

It is important to understand the different genres of sports reporting, because each genre tries to deliver messages in different packages and ways. Also the purpose as the message has been intended by the reporter differs from genre to genre. The audience interprets the different genres according to their preferences as well as their agenda of media consumption. The understanding of the essences of genres in journalism is an important remark by Eide [2011] that has been neglected by some of the previous researchers and theorists.

2.3 Impact of the Internet on traditional media

The development of the Internet has been very dramatic in the last few decades. The Internet is said to have gained much attention in its unstoppable development. It is said that the role of the Internet in the flow of information has created a sense of "new era in communication" [Croteau and Hoynes, 2003, p.3]. This sophistication also allows people to access new information and knowledge about the world and the way people live their lives. According to Holmes [2005, p. 2], people who use the Internet "not only encounter and use information and communication technology", but also "their modes of action are enframed by these technology". However, with regard to its impact on traditional media, the Internet is seen as threat that will eventually take over the role of traditional media. This is a big issue where the first media age is now encountering challenges to win back their audience and even to survive from extinction. Some people certainly believe that since the invention of the Internet, the first media age is starting to lose its dominant roles as the major source of information for public.

On the one hand, the Internet is somewhat different from traditional broadcast media. According to Yoon and Kim [2001], there are some aspects that distinguish the Internet from broadcasting. There are no restrictions in terms of "delivery of information beyond time and space", the source of information is unlimited, as well as the ability to focus on specific group of people. Internet is faster in the way it distributes the information through the "digitalisation and electrification" of the message [Poster 1995:3].

The Internet proposes the idea of "communication of many to many in chosen time on a global scale" [Castells 2003:2]. This allows people to have a sense of freedom by which they can express their thoughts and feelings. This is different from what broadcasts media are doing in relation to one speaks to many, where senders choose the information and meanwhile the receivers absorb everything that they get from the media [Negroponte 1995; Poster 1995]. Furthermore, the remarkable development of the Internet creates an idea of "information revolution" of society, whereby information is free and available to all the people around the world [Given 1998]. Individuals are now more powerful and considerably have access to a new dimension of information, knowledge and experience where they themselves can be independent media producers [Geidner 2006:342]. The use

of the Internet in obtaining information has become very fashionable because people can get the information in more flexible and convenient ways. Moreover, some authors concur that two thirds of news consumers use online news resources and the World Wide Web to seek information and this number is increasing as audiences will demand more and more news websites [Conley and Lamble, 2006; Foust, 2005; Fallows, 2004, cited in Westerwick, Sharma, Hansen and Alter, 2005]. However, traditional information resources will then encounter the fact that online media is now taking control over the news reporting. There are a lot of predictions on the extinction of traditional media [Nguyen, 2006]. Nguyen states that the role of the Internet as a powerful medium of information is now taking over the dominance of traditional media industries since 1990s. According to Gilder [1992], television will soon give its way to the computer, because most people spend more time searching online news websites rather than watching TV [Conley and Lamble 2006]. Castells argue that this development has formulated a huge television network, where the number of satellite television is increasing rapidly. This has also lead to the development of HDTV where people can enjoy good quality of images and texts through the installation of the Internet into television.

The newspaper in the past was arguably the most powerful medium that could reach a huge of audiences. However, today's newspapers have lost their dominant role. According to Franklin [2008, cited in Cole and Harcup, 2010], some particular newspapers no longer exist, while others survive on one edition per day. Furthermore, the decline of newspapers shows that newspapers are losing their readership due to the dominant role of online media [Franklin 2008, cited in Cole and Harcup, 2010; Curtice and Mair, 2008, cited in Cole and Harcup, 2010]. Kawamoto [2003] adds that printed newspapers will continue to lose readers but they will potentially survive if they can embrace new technology and restructure their organization and content, so their readers will find them relevant and topical. Gilder [1992] states that the online newspaper is far more beneficial compared to the print version because online newspaper provides the readers with further detailed of information and links that are relevant to the particular stories and events.

Similarly, radio is also losing its listeners because nowadays people prefer to browse the Internet or listen to online news. There used to be considerable journalism crossover with this media. However, Starkey and Crisell [2009] argue that since the Internet is now able to provide information from the previous day which the radio cannot, people are now turning their habits of listening to the radio over the Internet.

The Internet plays a pivotal role in spreading information to public. The flexibility of the Internet allows people to break the time and space boundaries in both accessing and sharing new message to other people and the rest of the world. People are now more knowledgeable and independent in creating their own information through online broadcast. This will give the public freedom to choose and determine their own pathway of living, as well as allowing them to be creative in the media environment. However, this sophistication of information is seen as a hindrance and threat to broadcast media. It is said that traditional journalism media is at the edge of extinction and will not survive unless they can embrace new technology and restructure the content to be more topical and relevant in these information age.

In recent years, the language of the Internet has drawn a considerable amount of interest among linguists, some of whom have tried to label this variety of language. For example, Davis and Brewer call it electronic discourse and define it as 'writing that very often reads as if it were being spoken – that is, as if the sender were writing talking'[after Crystal 2001:25]. In his monograph on Internet language, Crystal [2001] uses the concept of Netspeak – a cover term for four communicative situations, i.e., e-mail, chatgroups, virtual worlds and the Web. In Crystal's view, Netspeak incorporates elements of both speech and writing, with the predominance of the latter. Finally, Biber and Conrad [2009] look at online language in a broader perspective, treating it as part of electronic communication. They elaborate on the situational and linguistic features of e-mails, text messages and e-forum postings, treating them as examples of electronic genres.

It is important to note that the role of reporters in general is changing due to the fast advancing technological developments as well as changes in ideologies and culture on a national level. Sports media is moving from a local or national outreach to global, 24/7 accessible communication [Lenskyj, 2006]. Not only the media platforms and institutions

are changing but also the media consumption and the work of sports reporters is [Schlegel, 2007]. While in Western Europe traditional media such as the press, radio and TV have held the key to mass communication, now the focus is changing towards the Internet as new main communication platform [Coakley and Donnelly, 2004]. In the book Sports and Society, issues and controversies by Coakley and Donnelly [2004] the roles of the journalists or commentators of the traditional media have been identified as follows:

Newspaper / magazines coverage vs Television / Radio coverage:

- emphasizes information and interpretation vs emphasizes entertainment;
- offers previews and summaries of events vs offers play-by-play images and narratives;
- provides written representation of events vs provides real-time representations of events;
- highlights facts and dominant ideology vs highlights heroic plays and dominant ideology;
- provide criticism of sports and sports personalities.

Taking the statement by Arthur Raney [2006] into consideration that the Internet combines all above mentioned functions of three traditional media, this means that online sports reporters need to be capable of covering sports for the traditional media. Another important task of reporters is that they have to spend most of their time to produce content across various platforms and keeping the information up-to-date. The other key point is that the Internet is a useful way to obtain information that cannot be obtained from traditional sources. The advances of the Internet have transcended the traditional limitations of word-of-mouth [Duan, Gu, and Whinston, 2008]. The Internet provides an opportunity for users to share a variety of information [Chen and Xie, 2008; Steffes and Burgee, 2009]. There are different views on how the use of the Internet to obtain news information affects traditional news media. For instance, Ha and Fang [2012] found that the Internet had a displacement effect on traditional media, including television and newspapers, in the daily news domain. However, several researchers have argued that the use of the Internet for news information has complementary effects on traditional news

media [e.g., Nguyen and Western, 2006]. Dutta-Bergman [2004] reported that users of online news media were more likely to seek out news from traditional media outlets.

The impact of the Internet on traditional genres is explored by Inger Askehave and Anne Ellerup Nielsen. In "Web-Mediated Genres – A Challenge to Traditional Genre Theory" the scholars attempt to extend the functional genre model to account for non-linear, multi-modal, web-mediated documents. Their study adds a two-dimensional perspective to the genre analysis model in order to account for the fact that web documents not only act as text but also as medium. They draw on homepages as their illustrative material and regard links as constituents in the genre analysis model which marks a significant departure from traditional genre analysis. Little has been done to use the genre model on genres transmitted through one of the most significant digital media of today: the World Wide Web. They argue that as the world changed – not least spurred by the enormous potential of the new technology – and as the possibilities for communicating via the WWW arose, the need for webmediated genres emerged too. Most genres developed gradually. In the beginning genre conventions for new types of texts were almost non-existent.

However, as the use of web communication gained ground, and more and more companies and organisations, including newspapers and magazines began to go on-line, new genre patterns gradually emerged.

2.4 Live text commentary

LTC (also known in various media as "minute-by-minute", "text commentary", "live match report") is a relatively recent and so far under-researched genre. [cf. Jucker, 2006, Chovanec 2006, Perez-Sabater et al. 2008] The online commentary is " live" because it is made available on the Internet almost real time, i.e., contemporaneous with the event that it describes, yet it is in the written mode, hence the attribute text that distinguishes it from spoken commentary [cf. Jucker 2006]. It is precisely this hybrid nature of LTC that lends it some of its typical characteristics and also provides the genre with the models on which it draws. This is a relatively new variety of online language,

which has not received due attention of linguistic and stylistic research. Though our analysis will be restricted to football commentary, it is safe to assume that many, if not most, of its findings will apply to the online reporting of other sporting events.

As Jan Chovanec shows in "Simulation Of Spoken Interaction In written Online Media Texts" [Brno Studies in English, Volume 35, No. 2, 2009] LTC is a new genre of online journalism that has come into existence thanks to modern information and communication technologies which allow the almost instantaneous production and dissemination of textual reports to broad audiences. It is distinct from blogging in that LTC is an institutionalized genre of journalism rather than a personal account of events: the texts are written by professional journalists and are presented online on the web pages of established newspapers, usually in the news or sports sections. Moreover, the commentary is produced at the same time as the extralinguistic events which the LTC describes, allowing for only minimal time-lag necessary for the physical production of the written message and its posting online. Needless to say, LTC may – similar to weblogs – contain a degree of subjectivity and lack the impersonality of presentation preferred in other kinds of journalism; this property is taken to be connected with the impression of immediacy which LTC tries to recreate in the written text.

Not surprisingly, LTC now appears widely in various newspapers because it can bring readers the most topical information imaginable – the events are reported on while they are still unfolding, i.e., '*in medias res*'. It follows a temporal framework with (ir)regular updates on the latest developments. It follows a temporal framework with (ir)regular updates on the latest developments. It follows a temporal framework with (ir)regular updates on the latest developments.

LTC is suitable particularly for those events that can be scheduled in advance, so that journalists can wither be present at the scene or follow some mediated coverage of the event in real time, e.g. on TV. Such events can be easily prescheduled and are covered by the media in the form of live text commentaries.

Nevertheless, the area that is most widely covered in the media by means of LTC is sports reporting. This is hardly surprising: sport events have a fixed temporal structure and a clear cultivation at the end thus providing a focus for the reporting as well as the

motivation for the readers to keep on reading. Focus for the reporting as well as the motivation for the readers to keep on reading.

In terms of its textual and information structures, LTC has several distinct types. First, there is LTC that reports on the extralinguistic events. The orientation to the information providing function makes this 'purest' kind of journalism among the different kinds of LTC [cf. the analysis of this type by Jucker, 2006] The journalist's account can be solely factual, though it can include evaluative comments. There is also live commentary that incorporates reader feedback [cf. Chovanec 2006, Perez Sabater et al, 2008]. In this case, the journalist includes textual segments from the readers' emails or other kinds of messages, often responding to them. As a result, the live commentary becomes interactive and heteroglossic, i.e., consisting of several distinct voices. Finally, there are other kinds of LTC, most notably where the text of the commentary is a monologic, referential account of events while the relevant web page simultaneously provides space for unregulated chat communication between members of the audience. [cf.Chovanec, 2009] As mentioned above, LTC has become very common in the area of sports reporting. Such reporting provides on of the genre models in the form of 'unscripted commentary' [Crystal and Davy, 1969], 'sports announcer talk' [Ferguson, 1983] or spoken sports commentary in general. While register-oriented studies tend to define varieties on the basis of linguistic features, genres are defined non-linguistically [Biber, 1989] as systematic and predictable variations in language use, sometimes with respect to their central purpose, prototypical form and content, recognition within the community [Swales, 1990]. Genres describe recurrent patterns of language use. They are dynamic in the sense that they do not exist as some independent entities; speakers/writers use them to achieve their own communicative goals and to develop and sustain personal relations with others.

Moreover, LTC is an instance of mass media communication, with sports commentary as one of its models (due to the lack of visual input, the model is radio rather than TV broadcast). LTC, as a subgenre of sports reporting, is a mass media speech event, produced by professional commentators in real time for the benefit of mutually anonymous mass audience consuming the commentary in a split spatial context, i.e., in numerous locations different from its place of production. As Ferguson [1983:156] points

out, the register of 'sport announcer talk' shares a crucial element with other forms of broadcasting talk: it 'is a monologue or dialogue-on-stage directed at an unknown, unseen, heterogeneous mass media audience who voluntarily choose to listen, do not see the activity being reported, and provide no feedback to the speaker'.

However, sports reporting, as noted in the pioneering study by Crystal and Davy [1969], differs from some other types of mass media communication by creating the impression of conversational casualness. According to their findings, this effect is conveyed by the skilful use of both grammatical structures and lexical items. The sense of casualness is, for instance, achieved on the syntactic level by the loose stringing of sentences by means of the conjunction 'and'. As to lexis, the impression of casual conversation and spontaneity is signalled by the choice of informal vocabulary.

In comparison to traditional types of sports commentary, online live text commentary displays several similarities and differences. It is, likewise, an institutionalized instance of mass media communication, since it is created by professional commentators working for online versions of daily newspapers, such as the Guardian, the Telegraph and the Daily Mail which have provided material for analysis in the thesis.

LTC differs from traditional sports commentaries on TV and radio in two respects: (1) the medium (i.e. the mode) of the text and (2) its time of production. Unlike commentaries in print media, live text commentaries are written for the Internet and are read online by their audience. In addition, there is a brief time delay between the occurrence of an event in the field and its transformation into a written verbal commentary (and occasionally also spoken speculation over the facts of some less obvious event happening on the pitch and requiring a replay in slow motion, for instance).

Although LTCs are substantially different from traditional types of sports reporting, they nevertheless aim to create much the same effect of casualness and spontaneity. The authors of online LTCs skilfully manipulate various linguistic structures and strategies in order to create a communicative event which combines information about the game with interpersonal gossip unrelated to the game itself, thus constructing a text that operates on two levels of narration. As a result, the interactive type of LTC can be approached in terms of a primary layer of narration, i.e., the commentary on the game itself (be it in the form of

a relatively factual provision/reporting of information or a highly subjective and evaluative commentary), and a secondary layer (the 'gossip' layer). In addition, to further complicate the narrative structure, the latter may become fragmented into several parallel thematic lines pursuing their own topics. [cf. Chovanec, 2009].

Chapter 3
Methodology

We have entertained the idea of investigating the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of live text football commentaries published in online versions of the English newspapers as they are both similar to and different from traditional print commentaries. Moreover, the advent of the Internet has ushered in a whole new niche for new genres in journalism and new opportunities for sport fans. Live text commentaries are intended for a large international or local audience and provide a detailed coverage of an ongoing football match.

The illustrative material consists of 15 transcripts of online written commentaries taken from sports sections of online British newspapers such as the Sun, the Daily Mail and the Telegraph and official web sites of English football clubs such as Liverpool and Manchester United. The transcripts are analysed from general linguistic and stylistic perspectives. We have taken into account Ferguson's study of SAT, T. Lokshina's and N. Prom's studies of the text categories underlying print sport commentaries in quality and popular press and focused on J. Chovanec's research of simulated spoken interaction in written online media texts. This combined approach enabled us to analyse how the commentators manage to describe the ongoing sporting events, report the games minute-by-minute and, at the same time, make them interesting for football fans; how they engage in the expression of their attitudes through using the expressive language means; how they make sense of each player's actions.

In the short samples used throughout the thesis we describe crucial graphological, lexical, syntactic and stylistic in order to identify the linguistic and stylistic parameters common to this hybrid genre.

In the following analysis, we begin with the typical features examined by other researchers and continue with the insights that we have gained in the research. The analysis is then divided into three parts. Firstly, graphological representations of paralinguistic features of the genre are investigated. This is done very generally, since an in depth phonetic analysis is not an aim of this thesis, as it could easily serve as an independent thesis topic. After this, an analysis of syntactic features follows. It is primarily based on the transcripts and also on the findings in Ferguson [1983]. It analyses the specific features of the football commentary such as ellipsis, high incidence of passives, inversions, use of tags and prefaces, use of modifiers or specific tense usage. Lastly, an in depth analysis of lexical features is given. The focus here is both on the genre-specific vocabulary and phraseology and on formulaic language as formulated in Kuiper [1996]. Special emphasis is given to stylistic devices found in the live text football commentaries.

Furthermore, revealed are linguistic variables of online sports commentaries. As far as the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of the live match commentaries are concerned, we have to keep in mind the impact of the Internet. The language of the commentators is directed to a considerable extent towards the commentary so that the audience on the screen get more information about the match and will be shared with the feedback of experts.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this chapter has been to test the findings of the first stage of the study as well as submit the texts chosen for the study to a rigorous analysis. First, this chapter looks at graphological representations of paralinguistic features of online football commentaries. Then an analysis of syntactic features follows. Though the transcripts contain such linguistic phenomena as ellipsis, high incidence of passives, use of tags and

prefaces, use of modifiers or specific tense usage we will focus on most common ones such as metaphors, heavy modifiers, inversions, shortening, vulgarities and graphological representations. It is followed by an in-depth analysis of individual lexical features with a focus on stylistic devices and pragmatic features (represented mainly by the dialogism of the football commentaries). Finally, all the features are viewed within the broader text categories discussed in the second chapter.

Before we introduce the new variables we detected in our data sample, we will begin revisiting key characteristics of the genre to figure out if they are still prevalent. We will follow the same order starting with linguistic features and then move to stylistic features of online football commentaries.

4.1   Graphological representation of phonological features

In written discourse, graphology takes over some of the functions which fall within the scope of phonology or prosody in the spoken mode. This concerns both the actual representation of sounds and the conventional indication of certain suprasegmental features such as intonation, stress, etc.

Features evocative of the spoken mode are thus realized, among others, as the emphatic lengthening of written representations of sounds [e.g., Peep! Peep! Peeeeeep!! Ger-Tur, end of game] and the excessive use of multiple punctuation marks and capital letters [cf. Jucker 2006: 125]. This is a stock strategy shared with other types of computer-mediated communication, such as email or online chatting [cf. Crystal 2001: 34, Herring 1996, 1999].

In online football commentary, such emphatic lengthening imitating the genuine emotionality of speech in the written mode typically occurs in the reporting of crucial moments of matches, as in the following example when a goal is scored: GOLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL France 1 Ukraine 0 [Sakho 22, Fra-Ukr, 22 mins]. A similar function of indicating an increased degree of emotionality is sometimes performed as a result of the segmentation of clauses and phrases into independent units, cf. It's all over! France are heading to Brazil! Peep! PEEP!! PEEEEEEP!!! [Fra-Ukr, 90 mins]

Other features include the conventional indication of emphasis by means of changing the font "*Er, that was a penalty*," reckons Ben Overlander. "Hit his arm!" Looked like it hit Debuchy square in the midriff to me. [Fra-Ukr, half time]   *Ugh. He's quite understandably booked for that nonsense. No need for it.* [Eng-Per, 26 mins] as well as the written representation of other paralinguistic phenomena, such as pauses "*France do get a free-kick as Yarmolenko catches Ribery out on the left. Dangerous one this* […]" [Fra-Ukr, 5 mins]

4.2 Grammatical and syntactical features

On the syntactic level, there is a whole host of devices and structures whose informality and spokenness contribute towards the synthetic personality of live match reporting. Jucker [2006: 122] shows that the proportion of clausal and non-clausal units in live match reporting [LMR] is almost identical to British English conversation [as based on the data in Biber et al. 1999]. As regards sentence types, statements satisfying the referential function of information-provision are complemented with exclamatives, directives and interrogatives with their expressive, emotive and conative functions. This means that the focus is no longer exclusively on the message but also, to a significant degree, on the actual discourse participants. The focus can be both other-oriented [as in directives and questions] and self-oriented [as in exclamatives], cf. the following examples:

- And still they come. I'm sorry, do you hear? I'M SORRY! IT WAS RAMIS! IT WAS RAMIS! IT WAS RAMIS! OK? [Cro-Tur, ET 4 mins]

- It's all over! France are heading to Brazil! Peep! PEEP!! PEEEEEEP!!! France have done it. Ukraine collapse to the turf. Les Bleus begin the celebrations. [Fra-Ukr]

- Shock! Horror! Greece are actually mounting a few dangerous looking attacks, mainly down the left. [Por-Ger, 31 mins]

- Those quirky guys! They even do A4 signs better than us... [Bayern-BVB, preamble]

Exclamatives as in the last example above often serve the function of motive and involved commentary on the progress of the game. The same holds true for interrogatives, such as "shouldn't that be a penalty? [Por-Gre, 67 mins]", where the negative polarity of the question indicates its rhetorical and evaluative character, in that it presupposes a particular [i.e. a positive] answer.

Spokenness [or colloquialism] in live commentaries is further conveyed through characteristic sentence and clause structures, and numerous other phenomena more common in speech than in writing. In terms of sentence and clause structure, repetitions and incomplete sentences with ellipsis of subjects and verbs, characteristically occurring at the highpoints of the game, tend to convey a marked degree of immediacy and conversationalism in the written text. Many of the utterances manifest features that represent the constructional principles of spoken grammar [cf. Biber et al. 1999], such as prefaces and tags, non-clausal inserts, syntactic non-clausal units, and ellipsis in clausal units.

In addition, inserts constitute an interesting phenomenon whereby utterances can be expanded. Inserts can function as interactive devices that contribute towards increasing the dialogism of monologic texts. This concerns, above all, a reader-oriented utterance, such as a rhetorical question which serve to interrupt the clause structure by means of inserting an explanatory or evaluative comment. Such reader oriented inserts, used as interactive interpolations of one's own voice, occur in the following examples:

- Unbelievable. Absolutely unbelievable. From a corner, Greece nab a winner when a missed header at the front post by – who else? – Vladimir Smicer allows Traianos Dellas to head it home from a few feet. [Gre-Cze, ET 15]
- Much hilarity in the ITV commentary box as the linesman, you'll like this, loses his flag! Ho ho ho! Tuncay ferries a replacement across the pitch. [Tur-Cze, 65 mins]

Moreover, the various means of establishing an informal atmosphere, achieved thanks to the linguistic recreation of the impression of orality, operate simultaneously as interplay rather than in isolation. Informality and spokenness are accompanied by other discourse phenomena and strategies, such as frequent self-references by the commentators,

the use of first and second person pronouns as features of involvement [cf. Chafe 1982, Kuo 2003], the reliance on presuppositions, background knowledge and shared contexts, etc.

Additionally, it is essential to point out that live text commentary is a hybrid genre that draws on the genres of spoken sports reporting and computer-mediated communication. It comes as little surprise then that LTC is marked by the orality, spokenness, conversationalism and informality noted in other genres of CMC as well [cf. Crystal 2001]. What makes LTC unique, however, is the nature of the interpersonal interaction in one of the types of this new genre, the interactive LTC. It is here that the most diverse representations of spoken features can be found as regards not only the interactiveness of the language but also the structuration of the utterances into pseudo-dialogical heteroglossic exchanges between the expert and the reporter. In LTC, as a genre of mass media communication, the use of linguistic features connected with orality and casualness also combine with the topicality of the events covered or discussed. This is because the spoken language provides an immediate, though ephemeral, reaction to the events. While ephemerality is not an issue in written online media, the immediacy connected with the spoken mode is retained. Spoken features on whatever level such as phonological, lexical, syntactic, pragmatic may help to convey the impression that the events are being covered in as topical a manner as possible. Since the events are being reported almost in real time, the choice of the various linguistic features and characteristics of spoken language rather than written language becomes a symbolic simulation of the immediacy of the events.

4.2.1 Simplification

As Ferguson and Reaser have pointed out, the deletion of linking verbs and sentence-initial subjects is a distinct marker of many genres, including SAT. In headlines, note taking or captioning, the purpose of usage is relatively clear. Headlines and captions ought to be short. Notes should be simplified as well, since otherwise the writer could simply use complete sentences. The original function thus seems to be linked to economy,

while it is true that headlines should be catchy as well. What, then, is the true purpose of simplification in SAT? Consider the first samples of the thesis:

(1) … so close! (.) [it is]with the ball bouncing about the box Yarmolenko forces in a shot which beats Lloris, but is stopped by Debuchy on the line. Valbuena swings in a corner … [it/s] Varane wins it, it drops back out to Valbuena. He lays the thing off to Cabaye, who curls his effort well over the bar. [Fra-Ukr, 45+2 mins]

(2) Germany look dangerous down the left, Ballack (…) powering in from the touchline and looping in a cross which, for a second, looks like finding the top-right corner of the net. [is] Torres's [is] lack of confidence betrays him; he's [is] set clear down the left and is surely able to power infield, into the box and take a shot on goal - but he decides to check back.

Both (1) and (2) are taken from live action reporting and feature many instances of simplification. Simultaneous pronoun and copula deletion can be found in (1) and once in (2). Mere omission of the subject is seen in (2), but could also be interpreted as missing a conjunction. Both excerpts additionally exhibit the omission of the linking verb after what Ferguson calls "a single word proper name" [Ferguson 1983:159]. While Reaser maintained that for his TV broadcast analysis both subject and linking verb deletion are evenly distributed along colour commentary and play-by-play reporting, the analysis showed a higher frequency for deletions during live match reporting. This observation challenges Ferguson's interpretation that the feature had been borrowed for its stylistic value, as it renders the speech informal and exciting. It rather seems like there is a communicative function behind the use of simplification. As the majority of tokens were found in the play-by-play component, Reaser seems to be right when he attributes the variable to the need for shorter utterances. It is very obvious that, even in a fast-paced and rarely interrupted sport as football, colour commentaries have much more time to formulate their contributions, since they mostly take the stage during a sequence of multiple replays. Live action, on the other hand, is fast-paced and spontaneous, which creates a greater need for an economy of words. Consider additional examples:

(3) Wright-Phillips, takes a touch, [and] gets a shot away [Marco Balzer-Siber, 2015]

(4) Good job here by Landon Donovan (.) [he] gets away from Romero (.) [and] gets away from the other defender who decided to play football and that's a foul, [it's a] free kick for the Galaxy [Marco Balzer-Siber, 2015]

Unlike the above mentioned examples in TV commentaries, online and written commentaries provide full information and describe the match in a more detailed way and there is no an economy of words. For example:

(5) Torres is so unlucky there. He jumps majestically to meet a deep cross from the right with his head, and crashes an effort onto the bottom of the left-hand post. [Ger-Spa, 22 mins]

(6) From a German corner, Ballack takes a shot from just inside the area. Sergio Ramos charges the effort down; Germany appeal for a penalty but the ball hit the Spanish defender under his arm. [Ger-Spa, 25 mins]

Besides the forms of simplification detected by Ferguson and Reaser, we can frequently find other deleted particles, as seen with the article and preposition in (2). In (3) and (4) patterns of recursivity become apparent, as the subject is not repeated or replaced by a pronoun in the following phrase, though reference is made to the same agent. Hence simplification is not only limited to sentence-initial subjects or linking verbs, but also to other elements – conjunctions, articles, or prepositions – all of which are easily recoverable for the viewer, who has visual access to the scene. As a result, it is likely that simplification is still a highly functional feature of TV football SAT [Ferguson, 1983]. It is not only a way of sounding more exciting or informal, though it is still possible that for these reasons other low-paced sports have adopted it. Instead, it facilitates rapid spontaneous reporting by deleting the material that is unnecessary for comprehension. When more time is available, as in recaps, utterances become more complete and fragments rarer, as can be seen in (5):

(5) Ooyah! Oof! Marchena hoofs Klose right in the trousers. That's a fair old Newton's Cradle clack. Poor guy. Oh me, oh my, Torres is so unlucky there. He jumps majestically to meet a deep cross from the right with his head, and crashes an effort onto the bottom of the left-hand post. [Ger-Spa, 50 mins]

To simplify the message due to time constraints then highlights under which pressure the commentators find themselves during live action reporting. Knowing that they are being broadcast on a large scale and that their audience expects only the most relevant and accurate comments does not make the job easier. Yet the facilitating practice is, as DeNu suggested that owed to the overly detailed action descriptions that announcers have taken on from the SAT of other sports. As such, the underlying face threat is self inflicted. British and German commentaries usually just call the players' names when these show fast pass combinations on the field, for instance:

"Down one end, the ball bounces up to Capdevilla's hand in his own area; the Germans complain, but come off it. Then Torres tears into the German area; Metzelder comes clumsily bundling in to clank the ball out for a corner, though his attempted tackle was more Broadfoot than Beckenbauer;" American announcers, on the other hand, tend to depict it like this [Ger-Spa, 29 mins];

(6) Ballack has the funk on, Raul style, at the moment. He enjoys a bit of a shoving match with Iniesta and Puyol, which is eventually stopped by Casillas, who comes rushing out of his goal to play peacemaker. Much good it does; both Ballack and Casillas are booked for their trouble. [Ger-Spa, 42 mins]

4.2.2 Subject-Dependent Inversion

Reaser already underlined that inversions are easily overestimated. In contrast to most of the variables he and Ferguson considered, it is more often featured in written than in spoken English. Since this is somewhat counterintuitive for a register that favors simplified expressions, it is highly marked. As a result, the inversion of subject and dependent stands out but might not be as frequent as previously assumed. The previous analysis [Ferguson 1982] confirms this idea, as it contains very few instances of inverted sentence structure. Here are almost half of the tokens found in the study of Ferguson:

(7) Comes in a little bit late there and misses the ball (..) Shaun Francis

(8) here's Omar González (.) Juninho, wide is Zardes (.) back out it goes again, Gargan

(9) Ahead is this long ball (.) searching for Wondolowski, it curled out of play in the air

In (7), the subject is strongly delayed, as if the announcer had originally "planned" on deleting the subject, but then realized that it is better to follow up with it for clearer reference. [Marco Balzer-Siber, 2015]

It goes without saying that there is not any time for planning, but that deletion happens subconsciously. (8) features two inversions at once. As the variable is so underrepresented, we could raise the question if the first token instantiates the second one. Either way, only the first use can be said to create a lag time for the announcer, since the second one does not even contain a player that has to be identified. Likewise, (9) features one instance of inversion, but again it is not for any benefit of the commentary.

From a pragmatic perspective, rather than a syntactic one, the feature represents topicalization. If the argument of the verb is fronted, as is the case with "wide," "back out," and "ahead" in (8) and (9), it becomes the topic of the sentence [Birner:212]. As a result, it receives greater stress than in its canonical position. In this light, these three examples signal the direction or anchor points before any other information is given and thus help the viewer determine the location of action more quickly. Though this does display an advantage to the announcer, it is at least functional to the viewer. Given that the feature is apparently prevalent in low-paced sports, but not frequently used in the football examples. It may have arisen in order to create that second of lag time. Yet the following examples show that reporters are perhaps not in need of this delay, or that they have come up with other strategies:

(10) here is McCarty on the move, broken up by Palmer, taken here by Amarikwa

(11) Pérez Garcia for Cronin, closed down, taken off him by Juninho (.) intercepted there by

Harris (…) Mátias Pérez Garcia on his debut (.) trying to combine with Harris (.) knocked away

(12) (..) out wide for Lovel Palmer and it slips under his foot (…) Wondolowski, Salinas

jamming the foot race (.) heavy touch though (.) Soumaré able to cut across (…)

Wondolowski keeping it in (..) Hurtado, backs off of Djaló (.) sends it through for Atiba Harris [Marco Balzer-Siber, 2015]

Samples (10) and (11) indicate that, instead of the traditional subject-dependent inversion Ferguson described, announcers often use passive constructions to create a lag time for identification. In the same manner, the focus is first on the action and then on the player. Though passive structures are highly frequent for both play-by-play announcers and colour commentaries, it cannot be said that they necessarily need them, as the examples in (12) exhibit. Here the players' names regularly appear at the beginning of a clause. Consequently, the few inversions that are represented in the thesis are mainly stylistic and not functional. Perhaps SAT has become more consistent in style – that is, more informal with an increasing number of passive constructions. Yet again, examples (8) and (9) have shown that there is a benefit to the viewer. Hence, the original communicative function might have been to highlight the anchor points in order to convey the spatial relations faster.

4.2.3 Result Expressions

Ferguson claimed in his study to find the two constructions *for + noun* and *to + verb* frequently to express a result instead of a purpose. This, he maintained, applies to sports reports he has observed. As a reason behind that he suspected a perceived reduction of effort, though it was not clear if they require in fact less energy than other forms. Result expressions of this nature are also frequent in the thesis of Marco Balzer-Siber [2015]. Some examples displayed in the following:

(13) Oyongo didn't fall for the fake (.) stayed with the play, deflects it out for the throw-in

(14) just doing enough to put it out for a goal kick

(15) and hitting Salinas to the side of the head, it's behind for a corner

(16) Gargan there to clear it out

(17) Sarvas to keep it alive

(18) Sean Johnson to deny Tim Cahill

(13) to (15) represent the for + noun constructions, which were regularly used after a play led to a dead-ball position. The result was hence not only the completion of an action. The to + verb expressions, as shown in (16) to (18), signaled the completion of action alone and were mostly preceded by the player's name. In some sense, the verb "managed" could be inserted right before the construction to clarify the conveyed meaning as a result. Once more, the result expressions were more thoroughly used by the play-by-play announcer than by the colour commentary, which hints at a deeper communicative function. In our opinion, Ferguson was on the right track when he suggested they save effort. While the to + verb constructions can also be seen as simplified versions that omit a verb, both forms are, at the very least, formulaic. Many more ways of expressing results in sports exist, but the announcers choose these two redundantly. This does, in fact, reduce the effort because they only have to insert the given facts of the situation into the expression template. Consequently, they can focus more on the accuracy of their commentary instead of the linguistic form.

4.2.4 Tense use

Ferguson suggested that in English sportscasting we find basically three tenses: the present simple for actions taking place at the moment of speaking, the present progressive to describe actions of extended duration, and the past for a rapid action regarded as having already happened. Ferguson also claimed that the general divide between the two present tenses may be that the present simple is used for direct reporting whereas the present progressive is used for background reporting. Tense usage in the British online sports reports broadly conforms to Ferguson's predictions. Almost all of the uses of the past tense refer to the sending off of the British player, Rooney, an incident that had happened before the section of commentary we have analysed.

Another salient point that has surfaced in the study is the likelihood that the stylistic features of each commentary are ultimately determined by the commentator's stance in general and toward football in particular. We have analyzed international matches and championships involving British teams precisely to ascertain if the commentary transmits a national identity. Many scholars have pointed out that international sporting events are

often vehicles for intense nationalist feelings. Hobsbawm [1990], for example, wrote that "the imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people" [p.143], or as Auster [1999] puts it, "countries now wage their battles on the football field with surrogate armies in short pants".

4.2.5 The use of comparatives and superlatives

The content of mediated sports is mostly static and only a few aspects are changing between the reporting [Stocker, 2009]. For example, the rules of a football game, its strategy and actors are always the same, what is changing are the individuals and the locations. One of the important factors that influence the way how sport is portrayed in the media are the reporting values as well as the creation of a "media reality". According to Schmalenbach [2004] and other researchers, such as Garry Crowford [2004: 130], the media has moved from simple reporting to staging sport realities. The reason for this development is the fact that sport has become an entertainment commodity accessible through different media channels [Schmalenbach, 2009]. In sports reporting, these realities consist of celebrities, drama and other narrative elements that are crucial for the narrative structure of sports output. [Crowford, 2004: 132-133]

Another aspect, that is very common in mediated sport is the use of sub-cultural language to show privileges as well as establish a feeling of belonging or bonding [Segrave et al, 2006: 37]. Segrave et. al [2006] states that through this aspect a differentiation between inside and outside can be created. Stocker [2009] mentions in his analysis that the use of slang in the mediation of sports often relies on repeating the same linguistic constructions over and over again. He explains this behavior of sports reporters as way of avoiding complex structures and contexts as well as meaning is given to the ordinary narrative structures [Stocker, 2009: 26]. Sports reporters reporting from sporting events are using more often so called "buzz words" in comparison to other journalists. [Stocker, 2009: 26]

4.3. Lexical expressive means and stylistic devices

On the lexical level, markers of informality and cues to the spoken mode are particularly frequent. Some of the most prominent ones include [Chovanec, 2008]:

Colloquial/slang vocabulary:

▪ 	Ballack […] is covered in blood. He's taken a whack to his left eye. Oh dear. [Ger-Spa, 38 mins]

▪ 	This is hotting up. [Ger-Spa, 64 mins] The Stade de France is awash with Tricolours. It's a tremendous sight. […] [Fra-Ukr, pre-match]

▪ 	Gerrard quarterbacks one down the right for Johnson, but the full back - who looked pretty shaky for Liverpool during the Premier League run-in - opts not to tear [Eng-Per, 6 mins]

▪ 	Ballack pings a ball forward […] [Ger-Spa, 2 mins]

▪ 	Lehman claws brilliantly away for a corner […] [Ger-Spa, 14 mins]

▪ 	Valbuena caresses the ball into the box, where everyone misses it and Pyatov is grateful to see the ball bounce harmlessly into his hands. [Fra-Ukr, 6 mins]

▪ 	Ronaldo bursts down the left with intent, cuts inside and hits the turf after running into Sergio Busquets. It looked like a dive and the referee agreed, waving play on but choosing not to book the Portuguse. Fair to say the two players didn't see eye-to-eye... [RM-FCB, 26 mins]

▪ 	Patient build-up play from the visitors again, with Xavi and Busquets orchestrating things in midfield. Real look content to go in level at half-time. [RM-FCB, 41 mins]

Shortening [of lexemes as well as phrases and compounds], e.g.:

▪ […] Lallana should collect, just to the right of the D, but the Saints player is asleep. [Eng-Per, 18 mins]

▪ […] "It's been said that England's best chance at the WC is to play like Liverpool [Eng-Per, 68 mins]

▪ […] and the ref does bugger all. [Ger-Spa, 64 mins]

Vulgarities, e.g.:

- Then suddenly a total cock-up by Sergio Ramos [Germany-Spain, Euro2008 Final, 2 min]
- it was Podolski who injected the heat into the situation in the first place by standing in his opponent's face inviting bother. Common sense prevails and the ref does bugger all. [Ger-Spa, 64 mins]

Interjections are occasionally used in unusual syntactic functions, e.g. as verbs or as components of various ad-hoc utterances and nonce-words, as in the following examples where the author shows his linguistic creativity through describing the spectators' reactions:

- Spain are dominating possession, and their supporters are cockily ole-oleoleing!every pass. "It's early days for oles," warns the Guardian's David Pleat [Rus-Spa, 59 mins]
- Touch-ole!-touch-ole!-touch-ole!-touch-ole! Spain are playing keep ball and Russia can't get hold of it. [Rus-Spa, 80 mins]

Some other lexical devices with similar functions include: **Allusions to taboos**, e.g.:

- A quiet start to the half again, and yet again the Germans begin by seeing more of the ball. They are doing *eff* all with it, mind. [Ger-Spa, 48 mins]

Figurative language, e.g.:

- Marchena hoofs Klose right in the trousers. That's a fair old Newton's Cradle clack. Poor guy. [Ger-Spa, 50 min]
- The Spain midfielder takes a swipe; the daisycutter was going just wide left but Lehmann fingertips it out anyway. [Ger-Spa, 53 mins]

Code-mixing [or Code switching] [regardless of whether the forms are correct or not], e.g.:

- Handball from Valbuena, right on the corner of the box. Très dangereux …[Fra-Ukr, 87 mins]
- Jaaa! Michael Ballack spielt!!! […] Jaaa! David Villa ist mit der thighknack!!!! [Ger– Spa, pre-match]

Lexical repetitions [cf. Culpeper and Kytö 2006: 70], e.g.:

- Enjoy your cakes, mate!" writes David Warcher, who either emailed before my second cake-related post, or is a cruel, cruel man. [Cro-Tur, ET 2 mins]
- Now now I, like Monaco, am going home. Au revoir. [Juv-Mon, after match]
- Pass, pass, pass, go France. [Fra-Ukr, 79 mins]

Most of the lexical items in the list above communicate extra meanings (connotations) beyond their denotative meanings: they add the writer's positive or negative emotions and evaluations, conveying a range of meanings that can be classified as stylistic, connotative, etc. [cf. whack; cock-up; ref]. Thus they can be grouped as stylistic features as well. Some of the items have little referential meaning in themselves, serving solely or mostly as markers of positive or negative emotion [cf. expletives such as bloody; Oh, Jesus; etc.]. Still others are relatively neutral [e.g., the adjective cruel], but they can be used in ways that indicate the author's evaluative stance [cf. the repetition a cruel, cruel man in the last example where the connotation of orality is conveyed by means of the writer's text-forming strategies rather than the systematic organization of the lexicon as in some of the other examples].

The highly colloquial and informal tenor of many of the lexical categories identified above shows an overlap with the characteristics style of the Internet. The overall effect of these expressions rests in the creation of an atmosphere in which the readers may feel at ease: they are addressed in a code which is casual and informal, and, thus, more personal than what is typically the norm for such institutional contexts as TV, radio or newsapers. Such expressions as expletives and taboo words help to bring down barriers existing in official and impersonal communication – the public merges with the private. Lewis [2003: 102] notes that online boundaries blur between mass and personal communication, between the published and the unpublished, between news and information, and the geographically-defined communities and peer-defined communities.

4.3.1 Headlines

The importance of sport across different media platforms is not only important for the media organizations, it is also important for the social interaction with its readers [Stocker, 2009: 23]. The mediation of online content [the Internet] needs to be seen as a combination or development of the three traditional media channels, press, radio and TV. The reason for this that online media combines all three media styles [Raney, 2006]. It also needs to be understood that the Internet is a 24/7 globally accessible communication channel [Kolodzy, 2006].

One of the crucial points of connection between the reader and the sports commentary is the headline. Therefore, the headline has a very important function in the descriptive structure of a report. Van Dijk [1991: 50] argues that due to its position, headlines are important for any textual output, because they set the mood for the story at large. Headlines follow their own grammatical and stylistic structures, for example headlines are often incomplete sentences [van Dijk, 1991]. Most commonly headlines give a short summary or introduce to the topic of the match report. At the same time, this means that the headline will influence the way the reader will interpret the text [van Dijk, 1991: 51]. Van Dijk [1991] argues that the reader will often not take the extra effort to analyze the text or the opinion represented in it. Due to the vast amount of textual output on the Internet, the relevance of headlines for online sports commentaries is even bigger than for the printed press. This is why the headlines are important to give a short summary of the linked text. The amount of online portals and pages that are dedicated to sports are large [Beck and Bosshart, 2003a]. Therefore, it is important for the reporters writing for these websites to attract as readers through their content [Beck and Bosshart, 2003].

The work of a journalist revolves around making places or events tangible to its readers and make them feel like they are eyewitnesses to the story themselves [Larsson, 2001:90]. One way of doing this is to employ language play to catch the reader's attention [Crystal, 1998:104-105]. Playful language, Crystal claims, is the result of writers appealing to readers by simply „being clever" by showing off their ingenuity with language. The purpose of this is that unexpected language attracts the attention of a reader and offers an extra dimension of enjoyment.

Online sports coverage differs from newspapers and broadcast media in that it is a quicker method of delivery as well as being presented differently [Andrews, 2005:152]. It is also possible to report online matches either through live commentary or through visual coverage. In terms of style, Andrews [2005:153] claims, sports reports written for web pages should refrain from using too florid writing and instead rely on being simple and factual in order to make it easier for the reader to absorb the content of the written work. Comparing the traditional media of printing and broadcasting, media conglomerates have to contend with an almost unlimited amount of bandwidth and content.

The fact that the data for this study was gathered from the online editions is an interesting facet, as online-based sports reporting differ from broadcast media and newspapers in that it is a quicker method both in terms of delivery as well as presentation. While it holds the advantage that it lends itself well to fast coverage of news and the possibility of live reporting, it differs from the traditional newspaper in terms of writing due to the online format. In terms of style, Andrews continues, online texts should be simple and factual as online-based features do not offer much in terms of scope for ornate language. This is a bit of a clash between the results from the data gathered in this study, as there was plenty of room for stylistic devices and also not investigated in-depth.

4.3.2 Sport Metaphors

Sports metaphors have the potential to create a sense of familiarity with the general public due to their public appeal and popularity [Semino 2008:99]. They provide familiar examples of scenarios that generate enthusiasm and emotional investment in the reader as well as often simple, visual representations of situations that belong to other source domains than just sports. Metaphor has traditionally been considered a highly creative phenomenon [Semino, 2008:42] which has led to an abundance of analyses throughout the years, dealing with demonstrating the value of artistry and significance in using different kinds of metaphor. Within this tradition, reporters have been considered the foremost creators of metaphors that gradually lose their metaphorical value until they become adopted into conventional language use.

- Sakho plays a neat ball in to Matuidi, but he's crowded out by a bevvy of yellow shirts. [Fra-Ukr, 29 mins]
- So, Philipp Lahm returns for Bayern, who look set to line up in a dashing 3-5-2 formation, with Bernat and Rafinha as wing-backs, attempting to hit Dortmund on the counter-attack, thereby beating them at their own game. [Bayern-BVB, after match]

- The manager admitted he might need to be "creative" to be certain of reinforcing his depleted squad for the second half of the season. [West Brom-Ars, preamble]
- Everton, meanwhile, also played well enough, but with Barry not matchfit and McCarthy missing, couldn't win enough possession for their attacking players to thrive. [Eve-Tot, after macth]

The sentiment of reporters being primary creators of metaphor is echoed by Andrews [2005:82] who lists three golden rules for writing: i) grab their attention, ii) keep their attention and iii) leave them satisfied. However, metaphors are nowadays so common that it is very rare that their figurativeness is noticed [Aitchison 2007:167].

The following categories will deal with the representation of nationality within the different reports. This aspect is important for the construction of the identities by the home and the competing team. Therefore, the occurrence and the frequency of the country names and their possible variations, e.g. English, England …, have been validated separated into home and competing team. Every time any of the forms appeared it is counted as one unit. Only the different forms of the two teams' country (home and competing) have been counted.

- France get off to a whirlwind start, harassing defenders and riding the roar from the stands. Debuchy goes down on the edge of the box, but gets nothing. [Fra-Ukr, 2 mins]
- France do get a free-kick as Yarmolenko catches Ribery out on the left. Dangerous one this …[Fra-Ukr,5 mins]

- It feels like France need to make the most of this. Surveys suggested fans had given up on this team but there's no evidence of that so far. [Fra-Ukr,7 mins]
- The referee gives Germany a free-kick, but keeps his pencil and notebook in his pocket. That was as obvious a booking as you'll ever see - perhaps he thinks Portugal have suffered enough. [Ger-Por, 88 mins]
- Portugal win a free-kick about 35 yards from the German goal. [Ger-Por,   85 mins]

4.3.3 Direct and indirect quotations

It has been counted how many direct and indirect quotations have been used that are connected to either the home or competing team. The source was counted as one unit, regardless of how often it has been quoted. However, if a source has been quoted through a direct and indirect quotation it has been counted twice, once as a source with a direct quotation and once as a source with an indirect quotation. The sources are also divided into four main categories:

1. Participants [players / coaches of home or competing teams]

2. Audience [fans not associated with any football association]

3. Experts [officials that belong to either the home or competing team]

- "Sakho will probably be on the bench for the Merseyside derby," writes my colleague Gregg Bakowski. "Nice way to bring him back down to earth." [Fra-Ukr, 76 mins]
- "What's the French for 'squeaky bum time'?" wonders Justin Kavanagh. "Temps de bum qui grince," reckons Google Translate. [Fra-Ukr, 85 mins]
- But for those of you who prefer your entertainment to be a little more anglocentric, here's an MBM of the 1966 World Cup final, which we put up today just because the BBC were doing exactly the same thing over on their website. [Eng-Per, half-time preview]
- "That 1966 MBM is a fake, isn't it?" suggests Marie Meyer. "The clue: no comments from Gary Naylor. I reckon even back then he would have been teletyping them in." [Eng-Per, 53 mins]

- "Since The Guardian was probably still based in Manchester in 1966 and I was a three year-old in Liverpool, I could have opened the window and shouted my comments," writes Gary Naylor re Marie Mayer's worries of 53 mins. [Eng-Per, 78 mins]

4.3.4. Heavy Modifiers

Heavy modifiers are the second feature that stands out in SAT for its formal character. Ferguson claimed that the variable is so rarely used in spoken English that even natives would have trouble integrating it flawlessly. Announcers, as trained public speakers, certainly do not struggle to include it for incidental descriptions. However, we need to consider the context, as the samples show [Marco Balzer-Siber, 2015]:

(19) Segares, the left back (.) has Shipp making a run to the by-line if he can get there in time

(20) Red Bulls bring Roy Miller, the Costa Rican, into the attack

(21) Stewart, the thirty-two year old from England (..) first to go into the book for that one

(22) defended well by the Polishman Krzysztof Krol

(23) The thirty-four year-old Italian (.) former Inter Milan man Ferrari denying New York (.) the opening score

(24) Salinas who told us yesterday (..) it's worrisome (.) that Yannick Djaló wouldn't be here, injured and out for this game

(25) Bernárdez (.) who played in a second World Cup for Honduras this year in Brazil

The first two examples (19) and (20) are short and simple. They require only the definite article and the position and, respectively, the nationality of the denominated players. Effortlessly added after the name, they do not really consume a lot of time or interfere with the live action depiction.

(21) on the other hand, features a more complex aside, including both the player's age and his country of origin. While the first two examples were taken from a high-paced attack description, (21) was uttered during an interruption in which the player Stewart received a booking. As a result, the announcer had no time pressure whatsoever to

continue with his action report, but felt free to give a little more background information than usual.

(22) and (23) are both examples of proposed adjectival constructions preceding the player's name. While the first utterance was made again during ongoing live description, the second was meant to be a recap after a significant scene. As such, the commentary was able to provide not only the age and nationality, but this time also career background of the player.

Finally, (24) and (25) display complete nonrestrictive relative clauses, which obviously consume the most effort and time to produce, as compared to the heacy modifiers and the adjectival constructions. In these scenes, the announcer deliberately ignored the live action (as there was no immediate significance or threat) and focused instead on the players.

This eliminates the time pressure of reporting, since the reporter can always zoom back into action if he deems it relevant enough. In brief, the use of heavy modifiers hinges on the time constraints the announcer is facing. During short interruptions or when he decides to ignore the live action there is time enough for complex relative clauses. When time is short, brief adjectival constructions can be easily sprinkled over the course of a description. What is also relevant to the use of heavy modifiers is the overall timing in the game. In his study, it became apparent that these incidental background deliveries happen more in the earlier stages of a broadcast when some viewers may be expected to be unfamiliar with the teams and players. Effective colouring of live action provides these casual followers with enough information to keep them interested and intriguing. It highlights relations and connections within the world of football that are beyond the game itself and makes the broadcast more of a learning experience that closes gaps of knowledge. In short, if we do not know the two teams that are playing, the announcers do well to familiarize me with the sides so that I can pick one and stay tuned. Contributing to this method are more than just incidental heavy modifiers, however. Their use is quite limited on TV, as Reaser already observed, when compared to the overall amount of background information given. As he suggested, the announcers have more time and thus more opportunities to provide this kind of knowledge in longer stretches of discourse. In

that way, the heavier modifiers, such as nonrestrictive relative clauses often display the beginning of a longer excursion away from the live action and thus must be challenged as being merely incidental.

4.3.5. Diminutive Elements

The term "diminutive" is commonly used in linguistics to refer to names and other expressions that have a belittling effect, often through the suffix –y, such as in "Benny" for "Benjamin." Marco Balzer-Siber [2015] specifically refer to elements that minimize the effect of the utterance, like in the following examples:

- Cabaye sand-wedges a pass towards the run of Benzema, but it's neatly intercepted. It's all got a little stop-start and scrappy again. [Fra-Ukr, 55 mins]
- Thew two then tumble - either Besic does just enough to put doubt in the mind of the ref, or Kane curls his leg around Besic's to make it look like a foul. Either way, no penalty is the call, and it looks a good one. [Tot-Eve, 90+2 mins]
- (26) QPR once again give the ball away in attack and Jarvis has a little run at the defence. [QPR-West Ham, 17 mins]
- He's found just inside the area by a brilliant aerial pass but he can't quite bring it down and onto his left (only) foot. [QPR-West Ham, 81 mins]

The first example shows the most commonly used diminutives: "a little" and "just." We have seen that online sports commentaries like SAT [Ferguson, 1983] tends to be rather simplified, omitting as many particles as possible unless they fulfill a more significant function. In this case, the elements weaken the proposition of the announcer's utterance enough to soften the criticism. Jarvis, the defender in (26), was clearly lucky after losing the ball that his team did not concede a goal. And he definitely had to be more decisive in the future in order to prevent that. In short, he almost caused his team to fall behind. However, commentaries must not be that rigorous in their language and so the minimizing "a little" undermines the player's failure to perform.

Likewise, defenders are under great pressure to prevent attacks they are responsible for. Acknowledging the difficulty to make a run with the forwards, the announcer did not criticize Jarvis in (26) as much as he could have. Instead, he lowers the pressure by

highlighting how surprising the pass was. In addition, he uses an understatement in the following, since Cabaye was offside by more than just one foot. The reporter takes notice of that and quickly repairs himself. After all, his journalistic integrity challenges him to stay truthful and make definite calls. Yet his diminutives gave the players enough credit to get away with the missed performances.

Consequently, the announcer has to be careful in his judgment. The commentator relativizes his utterance by making it more personal with "I think," which leaves room for other opinions. Once more we can observe the usage of "a little…" to take him out of the line of fire that he faces if exposed as a diver. Criticism of any kind – towards players, coaches, referees and fans – is always employed very tactfully. On the one hand, too extreme of a position jeopardizes the image of the announcer and attracts the spite of the opposition. On the other hand, commentaries also have a responsibility as public figures, since branding someone as a diver, for example, can direct the anger of fans towards this player. Careers have been ended over death threats and lives been taken over the immense pressure of performance. To point the finger can justify people's anger, while to minimize the errors can emphasize that all actors on the field are but human themselves. Therefore, the announcers are expected to strike a balance, which is reflected in their language of criticism. Diminutive speech, for that reason, is a variable with multiple benefits. While commentaries reduce the negative reception of the criticism they are expected to deliver by weakening their comments, they also save the public image of the actors on the pitch. Through the understatement of the player's failure to perform, the latter is relieved of a firmer attack. Announcers shape the perception of the viewers so strongly that you will often hear fans make the same statements on the day after a match, and rarely hear anyone contradict. Therefore diminutives seem to be a response to the audience's expectations, and protection from their judgment.

4.3.6 Deictic Adverbs as Signposting Devices

Another similar feature of SAT to OSC is what Beard calls signposting devices; that is, adverbs that point to a specific situation. Reading the online commentaries, I realized

quickly that each of the commentators used countless adverbs of time and space to refer to the actions on the field, such as in the following sample utterances:

(27) Juve are threatening to push Monaco back agains the ropes here and give them a proper pounding. [Juv-Mon, 54 mins]

(28) Life here bubbles and sizzles like in no other city in France. [Udi-Rom, preamble]

(29) And now? Well it would be wrong to say that you couldn't pay me to watch this match…[Int-Mil, preamble]

(30) …well, look at me right now, but I'll level with you, if I wasn't being paid to watch this match. [Int-Mil, preamble]

Each of these excerpts features one of the three most observable tokens. While we are fast to point out that "here" and "there" are adverbs of space and "now" an adverb of time, closer inspection will reveal that the practical usage may differ.

(27), for example, do not only index the place of action, but also the moment in which it happens. In other words, "here" could be replaced by "in that situation," which includes both time and space. Similarly, the use of the distal "here" in (29) refer to the scene as a whole. While the highlighted adverb "now" in (30) is initially only temporal, the second instance can again be interpreted as both locative and temporal, as it could not be substituted by "there." If adverbs of time and space are not really streamlined in their meaning, then what is their true function? For all we know, we can simply omit them in the samples without changing the meaning of the utterance. Kendon writes about the inherent inclination of humans to point to the things they are referring to. It does not mean that this signposting is always necessary for the reader to decipher the meaning of the utterance. This propensity to point is represented in the announcers' tendency to use adverbs as signposting devices. Knowing we share the same visual image, they index the situation on the field that they are referring to at the moment of the utterance. The lacking opportunities for use of body language thus alter the linguistic behavior. I mentioned above that most of the tokens can felicitously be replaced by "in that situation". However, given the time pressure we have determined as one of the main cognitive forces of the genre online sports commentary, commentators tend to shorten even the briefest of phrases

to their convenience. Vygotsky calls this "abbreviated speech". If the interlocutors in a social situation know each other well, or if they have enough contextual information to make the same inferences, it is possible to condense an utterance to a minimum. In this case, commentators can use any of the three signposting devices, since the context and the language choice will make it very clear what situation they are talking about. What appears most interesting about the distribution of signposting devices is that all commentaries use them while they certainly have a preference for one or two of them. One could have argued that the use of the more distal "here" in (28) is the greater lag time between the action and the recap of the scene, as opposed to (27), in which the report was more synchronic to the play itself. However, the analysis has shown that each commentator tends to use one of the adverbs much more than the others. As a result, signposting devices are a distinct feature of SAT as well as online commentaries, whereas the individual choice of the available adverbs is a matter of free variation. The use of this feature also renders the reporting more inclusive and creates a shared experience, as Lewandowski had suggested.

Chapter 5
Conclusion

In this study, we have attempted to look at sports commentaries from various perspectives, yet at the same time we have narrowed down our research to the linguistic and stylistic parametres of online football commentaries, later referred to as live text football commentaries. To do so, we have studied the specialist literature on the subject and presented an overview of the pivotal works. Many features of sports announcer talk had been described by Ferguson for SAT generally, but it became clear that the latter has plenty of subgenres. Lewandowski investigated Online Sports Writing and many forms of talk about and on football. Therefore, we have given insights into the new genre of online football commentaries, specifically written for the Internet. Recent studies suggest that broadcast and SAT had been traditional genres of sports reporting before the advent of the Internet and the emergence of new genres. The controversy between the terms "genre", "register", "style" and "text type" has been discussed, followed by our decision to adhere

to the notion of "genre" in this research. It has been established that the LTC is a hybrid CMC – based genre combining linguistic and stylistic features of oral and written speech.

The distinctive linguistic and stylistic features of LTC as a hybrid genre have been identified and discussed. It has been stated that the actual manifestation of the hybrid nature of LTC as regards spoken/oral/ conversational features and informal ways of expression is apparent on all levels of linguistic analysis – phonological, lexical, syntactic, as well as discursive. The present thesis does not aim to provide an exhaustive study thereof, however it shows how the mixing of the spoken and written modes comes to constitute the new genre.

These manifestations include graphological representations of paralinguistic features, grammatical and syntactical features of simplification, subject-dependent inversion, result expressions, tense use, the use of comparatives and superlatives as well as lexical expressive means and stylistic devices, heavy modifiers, diminutive elements and deictic adverbs. The presence in a written text of some elements of spoken interaction lends the entire speech informality and casualness. Spoken features on whatever level such as phonological, lexical, syntactic, pragmatic may help to convey the impression that the events are being covered in as topical a manner as possible. Since the events are being reported almost in real time, the choice of the various linguistic features and characteristics of spoken language used in written discourse becomes a symbolic simulation of the immediacy of the events.

These features were deemed important enough for consideration. They also illustrate the way reporters respond to challenging situations and deal with difficulties in commenting online football matches.

The thesis provides further understanding of the stylistic aspects influencing the language output of the online commentaries basing its arguments on transcripts of commentaries of various football matches. The information collected from the review seems to suggest that concerns more rely on the key characteristics of football commentaries and the impact of the Internet on traditional genres.

Furthermore, compared to printed media online commentaries offer more expressive language with regard to the duality model and the interplay of orality and written discourse.

Ultimately, research comparing traditional and online genres would be useful, as it would exhibit the relationship of printed media and the Internet in more detail. It could potentially show how commentators describe the sporting events and express their emotions during the ongoing matches on the pitch.

Football will continue to be the most popular sport in the near future and hence receive even greater coverage. In Europe, the general interest in football is rising and the number of fans is growing steadily than in any other part of the world. It opens up new opportunities for the online mass media. Thus, one also has to pay attention to the fact that the online coverage are intended for sport fans who are not able to watch the matches for some reasons but they have an opportunity to follow LTCs on the Internet. On the other hand, the Internet provides them with more options of live commentaries, fora and chat groups which the commentators are also aware of them. How this affects the language of the commentator is not yet clear. We are becoming more diverse in the age of globalization. Due to the technological advancements, we are sometimes able to follow a team from another country with live commentary options. These shifts in readership may or may not cause a reconsideration of the duality system, and so it is worth keeping an eye on the development of sports commentaries.

Abbreviations

LTC – Live Text commentary

LMR – Live Match Reporting

OSC – Online Sports Commentary

CC – Colour Commentary

SAT – Sports Announcer's Talk

WSC – Written Sports Commentary

FIFA – The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (English: International Federation of Association Football)

UEFA – The Union of European Football Associations

PP – play-by-play

MM – minute-by-minute

CMC – Computer Mediated Communication

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Добросклонская, Т.Г. Вопросы Изучения Медиатекстов. Москва. 2005 г.

2. Истрате, П. Лингвостилистические и риторические особенности спортивного репортажа как жанра СМИ: На материале футбольного репортажа. Москва, 2006 г. [Электронный ресурс, режим доступа] – http://www.dissercat.com/content/lingvostilisticheskie-i-ritoricheskie-osobennosti-sportivnogo-reportazha-kak-zhanra-smi-na-m

3. Котов, А.А Механизмы речевого воздействия в публицистических текстах СМИ, Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени кандидата филологических наук, - Москва. 2003 г. [Электронный ресурс, режим доступа] – http://www.dissercat.com/content/mekhanizmy-rechevogo-vozdeistviya-v-publitsisticheskikh-tekstakh-smi

4. Кузнецов, Г. Журналист ТВ: за кадром и в кадре. Москва. 1990 г. [Электронный ресурс, режим доступа] – http://www.journ.msu.ru/study/handouts/zo/2y3s/osnovy_tv_journ.doc

5. Локшина, Т.Б. Соотношение стилевых, коммуникативных и информативных аспектов текста (на материале английских газетных текстов спортивной тематики). Диссертация на соискание ученой степени кандидата филологических наук, - Москва. 1983 г.

6. Пром, Н.А. Современный газетный спортивный репортаж: жанрово-стилистический аспект. Волгоград, 2011 г. [Электронный ресурс, режим доступа] – http://www.dissercat.com/content/sovremennyi-gazetnyi-sportivnyi-reportazh-zhanrovo-stilisticheskii-aspekt

7. Шарафутдинова, С.В. Формирование социальной оценки в дискурсе СМИ. Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени кандидата филологических наук, - Ижевск 2010 г.

8. Юровский, А. Телевидение поиски и решения. - М.: Искусство. 1983.

9. Цвик, В.Л. Журналист с микрофоном: Учебное ... ун-та, 1985. - 192 с.

10. Abercrombie, N: Television and Society. Cambridge: Polity Press. 1996.

11. Aitchison, J. The word weavers: Newshounds and wordsmiths. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2007.

12. Allen, R: 'Bursting bubbles: "Soap opera" audiences and the limits of genre'. London: Routledge, pp. 44-55. 1989.

13. Andrews, P. Sports Journalism: A Practical Introduction. Gateshead: Athenaeum Press. 2005.

14. Auster, P. Best game: Where have all the young men gone? New York Times. Retrieved November 26, 2007.

15. Balzer-Siber, M. Functional and Stylistic Features of Sports Announcer Talk: A Discourse Analysis of the Register of Major League Soccer Television Broadcasts, East Tennessee State University. 2015. [Electronic resource] – http://dc.etsu.edu/etd/

16. Beck, D., and Bosshart, L. Sports and the Internet. Sports and Media , 22, pp. 14-15. 2003.

17. Biber, D. An analytical framework for register studies. In D. Biber and E. Finegan (Eds.), Sociolinguistic perspectives on register (pp. 31-56). New York: Oxford University Press. 1994.

18. Biber, D. Variation across speech and writing. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 1988.

19. Biber, D., Conard, S., and Leech, G. Student grammar of spoken and written English. Harlow, UK: Longman. 2002.

20. Blommaert, J. Discourse. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

21. Blommaert, J. et al. Ethnography, linguistics, narrative inequality: Toward an understanding of voice. London: Taylor and Francis. 1990.

22. Brown, G. and Yule, G. Discourse Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

23. Brown, G. Speakers, Listeners and Communication: Explorations in Discourse Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

24. Cahill, Spencer E., and Kent Sandstrom. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

25. Castells, M. The Internet Galaxy – Reflections on the Internet, Business and Society Oxford University Press. 2001.

26. Chen Y., Xie J. Online consumer review: Word-of-mouth as a new element of marketing communication mix. Management Science, 54, 477-491. 2008.

27. Chovanec, J: 'Competitive verbal interaction in online minute-by-minute match reports'. 2006.

28. Chovanec, J. 'Focus on form: Foregrounding devices in football reporting'. Discourse and Communication 2(3), 219–243. 2008.

29. Chovanec, J. 'Narrative structures in online sports commentaries.' A presentation delivered at the 9th ESSE conference in Aarhus, Denmark. 2008.

30. Chovanec, J. "Simulation Of Spoken Interaction In written Online Media Texts". Brno Studies in English, Volume 35, No.2, 2009 [Electronic resource] – http://www.phil.muni.cz/plonedata/wkaa/BSE/BSE_2009-35- Offprints/BSE2009-35-2-(109-128)%20Chovanec.pdf

31. Coakley, J. J., and Donnelly, P. Sports and the media: could they survive without each other? In Sports in Society : Issues and Controversies (pp. 426-468). Boston, US: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited. 2004.

32. Conley, D. and Lamble, S. The daily miracle: An Introduction to Journalism (3rd eds). New York: Oxford University Press. 2006.

33. Croteau, D., Hoynes, W. Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences, 5th Edition. London: SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, USA. 2003.

34. Crowford, G. Consuming Sport: Fans, Sport and Culture. London, UK: Routledge. 2004.

35. Crystal, D., and Davy, D. Investigating English style. London: Longman. 1969. [Electronic resource] –http://www.davidcrystal.com/David_Crystal/stylistics.htm

36. Crystal, D. Language Play. London: Penguin Books. 1998.

37. Crystal D. The Internet and Language. London: Cambridge university press. 2001. [Electronic resource] – http://medicine.kaums.ac.ir/UploadedFiles/Files/Language_and_%20The_Internet.pdf

38. Crystal.D and D.Davy. Investigating English Style. London: Longman. 1969. [Electronic resource] – https://farnasfaisal.wordpress.com/2013/04/29/book-review-

investigating-english-style-david-crystal-and-derek-davy-london-longman-1969-264-pages/

39. Crystal, D. A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell. 1991.

40. DeNu, A. "Transforming Soccer Talk in the United States: The Misapplication of a Formulaic Announcing Methodology." ETC: A Review of General Semantics 67.3, 255-63. 2010.

41. Duan W., Gu B., Whinston A. B. Do online reviews matter? An empirical investigation of panel data. Decision Support Systems, 45, 1007-1016. 2008.

42. Dutta-Bergman M. J.   Complementarity in consumption of news types across traditional and new media. Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, 48, 41-60. 2004.

43. Eggins, S., and Martin, J. R. Genres and registers of discourse. In T. van Dijk, (Ed.), Discourse as structure and process (pp. 230-56). London: Sage. 1997.

44. Fairclough, N. Media Discourse. London: Edward Arnold 1995.

45. Fairclough, N. New labour, new language? London: Routledge. 2000.

46. Ferguson, Charles A. "Dialect, Register, and Genre: Working Assumptions about Conventionalization." Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Register. 1994.

47. Ferguson, Charles A. Sports announcer talk: syntactic aspects of register variation. Language in Society 12 (2): 153-72. 1983.

48. Fiske, John: Television Culture. London: Routledge (Chapter 7: 'Intertextuality'). 1987.

49. Fowler, A: 'Genre'. In Erik Barnouw (Ed.): International Encyclopedia of Communications, Vol. 2. New York: Oxford University Press, pp.215-7. 1989.

50. Geidner, NW. The rise of the individual and the dichotomy of modern media, in Review of communication, 6(4), pp. 342-347. 2006.

51. Gilder, G. The rise and fall of television, in Life after television: The coming transformation of media and American life. London: Norton, pp.35. 1992.

52. Given, J. The death of broadcasting?: Media's digital future. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press. 1998.

53. Ha L., Fang L. Internet experience and time displacement of traditional news media use: An application of the theory of the niche. Telematics and Informatics, 29,177-186. 2012.

54. Holmes, D. Communication Theory: Media, Technology, Society. SAGE Publications Ltd., London, UK, pp. 1–19. 2005.

55. Jucker, Andreas H. 'Live text commentaries. Read about it while it happens'. 2006.

56. Delin, J. The Language of Everyday Life. AGE Publications Ltd. 2000

57. Johnstone, B.Discourse Analysis. Malden: Blackwell, 2008. [Electronic resource] – http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=5467584

58. Kawamoto, K. Digital journalism: Emerging media and the changing horizons of journalism. In Kevin Kawamoto (ed). Digital journalism. Emerging media and the changing horizons of journalism (11). New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. 2003.

59. Kendon, A. Gesture. Visible Action as Utterance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

60. Kolodzy, J. Convergence Journalism: Writing and Reporting Across the News Media. Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc. 2006.

61. Kuiper, Koenraad. Smooth talkers. The linguistic performance of auctioneers and Sportscasters. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. 1996.

62. Kuo, Sai-Hua 'Involvement vs detachment: gender differences in the use of personal pronouns in televised sports in Taiwan'. Discourse Studies 5(4), 479–494. 2003.

63. Lavric, E. The Linguistics of Football. 2008. [Electronic resource] – https://books.google.ru/books/about/The_Linguistics_of_Football.html?id=heFduFfVSSIC&redir_esc=y

64. Lenskyj, H. J. Alternative Media versus the Olympic Industry. In A. A. Raney, and J. Bryant (Eds.), Handbook of Sports and Media (pp. 205-216). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc. 2006.

65. Lewandowski, M. "The Language of Online Sports Commentary in a Comparative Perspective." Lingua Posnaniensis 54.1. pp. 65-76. 2012. [Electronic resource] –

https://www.academia.edu/5645611/The_language_of_online_sports_commentary_in_a_comparative_perspective

66. Lewandowski, M. "The Language of Soccer: A Sociolect or a Register?" Język, Komunikacja, Informacja (Language, Communication, Information): 21-32. 2008.

67. Lewis, D.M. 'Online news: a new genre?' In: Aitchison, Jean and Diana M. Lewis (eds.) New Media Language. London and New York: Routledge, 95–104. 2003.

68. Müller, T and Robert, M. "Speech rate, emotion and time pressure in English and German football commentary." In: Weinert, Regina (ed.) Spoken language pragmatics: An analysis of form-function relations. New York NY: Continuum, 160-181. 2007.

69. Müller, T. Football, language and linguistics. Time-critical utterances in unplanned spoken language, their structures and their relation to non-linguistic situations and events. 2007. [Electronic resource] –
http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378216609001052

70. Negroponte, N. Being digital. New York: Vintage Books. 1995.

71. Nguyen, A and Western, M. The complementary relationship between the Internet and traditional mass media: The case of online news and information, in Information research, 11(3). 2006.

72. Pérez, Carmen, Gemma, Peña-Martínez, Ed T, B, Montero-Fleta: 'A spoken genre gets written: Online football commentaries in English, French, and Spanish'. Written Communication 25(2), 235–261. 2008. [Electronic resource] –
https://daveknot.files.wordpress.com/2009/05/online-football-commentaries.pdf

73. Poster, M. Social Theory and the New Media, The Second Media Age, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. 3–22. 1995.

74. Raney, A. A. Why We Watch and Enjoy Mediated Sports. Handbook of Sports and Media (pp. 313-329). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 2006.

75. Reaser, J. "A Quantitative Approach to (Sub) Registers: The Case of 'Sports Announcer Talk'." Discourse Studies 5.3 (2003): 303-21.

76. Segrave, J. O., McDowell, K. L. and J. G. King III. Language, Gender and Sport: A Review of the Research Literature. In L. K. Fuller (Ed.), Sport, Rhetoric and Gender:

Historical Perspectives and Media Representation (pp. 31-42). 2006. Gordonsvill, VA, USA: Palgrave Macmillan.

77. Schlegel, S. Ethics in Sports-Journalism? On (sportive) Fairness in Press Coverage. Munich: Audi Institute for Sports Communication. 2007.

78. Schmalenbach, H. Aktuelle Tendenzen in der Sportberichterstattung: Spekulation oder Faktentreue? Munich: Technischen Universität München. 2009.

79. Starkey, G. and Crisell, A. Radio journalism: Journalism studies: Key texts. Singapore: SAGE Publication. 2009.

80. Stocker, T. Österreich am Ball. Nationale Stereotypen in der Sportberichterstattung. 2009.

81. Swales, John M. Genre Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1990.

82. Turney, E. and Montero-Fleta, B. "A spoken genre gets written: Online football commentaries in English, French, and Spanish." 2008. [Electronic resource] – http://www.upv.es/diaal/publicaciones/WC313174.pdf

83. van Dijk, T. A. Racism and the Press. London, UK: Routledge. 1991.

84. Westerwick, S.K., Sharma, N., Hansen, D.L. and Alter, S. Impact of popularity indications on readers' selective exposure to online news: Journal of broadcasting and electronic media, 49(3), 296-313. 2005. [Electronic resource] – http://www.homeworkmarket.com/sites/default/files/impact_of_popularity_indications_on_readers.pdf

85. Yoon, SJ., Kim, JH: Is the Internet More Effective Than Traditional Media? Factors Affecting the Choice of Media, Journal of Advertising Research, 41(6):53–60. 2001.

APPENDIX

Example of a live text football commentary

Euro 2008: Germany 0-1 Spain

Updated 30 Jun 2008

What Raul might be up to this evening: enjoying a relaxing fag and pint; throwing a few snags on the barbeque; kicking back with the latest Marian Keyes; watching the final on telly in the mother and father of hot funks guardian.co.uk

Scott Murray
Sunday 29 June 2008 12.09 BST Last modified on Sunday 29 June 200821.59 BST Shares

Live feed

Order by

I wonder what Raul's up to this evening? Wherever he is, whatever he's doing, it's a fair guess he's not in a great place mentally; there's no real need to explain why, is there. Actually, come to think about it, he's probably a pundit on some Spanish channel or other, showcasing hitherto unknown ventriloquism skills by muttering "I hope the lads bring the trophy back home with them, really I do" through gritted teeth. I can tell you for sure what Michael Ballack's doing, though: despite a spot of bother with a calf muscle, he's playing.

Jaaaa! Michael Ballack spielt!!!! Lehmann, Friedrich, Metzelder, Mertesacker, Lahm, Hitzlsperger, Frings, Podolski, Ballack, Schweinsteiger, Klose.
Subs: Enke, Adler, Jansen, Fritz, Westermann, Rolfes, Gomez, Neuville, Trochowski, Borowski, Odonkor, Kuranyi.

Jaaaa! David Villa ist mit der thighknack!!!! Casillas, Sergio Ramos, Puyol, Marchena, Capdevila, Senna, Iniesta, Fabregas, Xavi, Silva, Torres.

Subs: Palop, Reina, Albiol, Fernando Navarro, Villa, Santi Cazorla, Alonso, Sergio Garcia, Guiza, Arbeloa, Juanito, De la Red.

Referee: Roberto Rosetti (Italy)

Kick off: 7.45pm

BBC punditry, the cost of which is met by you, the licence payer. According to Hurricane Alan, the name the Met Office has given to the whirlwind of hot air which has been circulating between Alan Hansen and Martin O'Neill for the past three weeks, Spain play "total football". Apparently this style of play is all about "playing it to feet, passes forward and running onto them". Does anyone want to give the new Rinus Michels a managerial position?

Where's Raul? An update. "Spanish papers say that Raul is in Australia on holidays with his kids," reports Xan Perez Perez, which makes Fig 1.2 the current favourite. "However other rumours say he asked Richard Branson for a space holiday to go further away."

The closing ceremony is absolutely brilliant. There are a load of 2.5m-high cones made out of balloons trundling around on wheels. Basically it's Jeux Sans Frontières, only without Eddie Waring, Stuart Hall or the ref that ran the line in the 1950 World Cup final keeping score. Oh, and Enrique Iglesias is providing the soundtrack; he's not a patch on Herb Alpert and his Tijuana Brass, I can tell you that for free.

The national anthems: Both are lovely, neither being that dirge we've thankfully gone the entire three weeks without hearing. You know, that one. Capdevilla spends the duration of Spain's by fondling Senna's left ear. "This pre-game show or performance is so not going to help Europe's image here in the United States," writes Bobby Otter, who is not as you'd assume a club comic from Wigan, but in fact a resident of Chicago. A resident of Chicago who has a bloody cheek dissing the pre-game jazz, given that Europe was forced to sit through Tom Petty during the last Super Bowl. "Anyway I think Spain wins thanks to three touchdowns from Torres. Ballack inspires Germany to one, but a costly interception

by Podolski in the last quarter allows Spain to sit on the ball and run out the clock. Final score: Spain over [Germany](#) 31-20."

And we're off! Torres gets the ball belted into his face by Metzelder. That's a throw to Germany. The only way is up.

2 min: A quiet start. Spain pass it around the back awhile. Then suddenly a total cock-up by Sergio Ramos, who passes inside from the right without looking, allowing Klose steal the ball and tear towards the Spanish area. Luckily for Ramos Puyol ushers him out to the left; Klose then takes a heavy touch and the ball is run out of play. That could have been so costly for the Spanish.

4 min: This is all Germany suddenly. Ballack pings a ball forward to Lahm down the left; the full back can't quite get to the ball before attempting a cross and the danger is over, but Spain - not for the first time in this tournament - are looking shaky at the back.

6 min: Iniesta tries to spring Capdevilla free down the left but the Spanish full-back is miles offside.

7 min: Sergio Ramos doesn't seem particularly bothered at the moment. For the third time in the game so far, Germany look dangerous down the left, Ballack powering in from the touchline and looping in a cross which, for a second, looks like finding the top-right corner of the net (think Paul Konchesky for West Ham in the 2005 FA Cup final) but ends up sailing across the face of Casillas's goal. Spain have started very poorly indeed.

11 min: Torres has touched the ball for the second time in the match. This time it isn't kicked into his face; it flies aimlessly off his toe instead. Spain are doing nothing whatsover up front. "Here in the US, our esteemed (English) ESPN commentator has just informed us that La Marcha Real is 'still one of the few national anthems in the world that has no words'," writes Mac Millings. "The Spanish, eh? It's the Final! You'd think they could have thrown in some lyrics, just for today." Fair's fair, Mac; given Germany's

experiences during this tournament, Spain were probably worried the folk at Swiss Ceefax would mistranslate them and start droning on about Franco.

13 min: Hitzlsperger had the first shot on target about four minutes ago, by the way. It was utterly hopeless, travelling at a speed of 2mph, so I didn't bother mentioning it. But nothing's going on at the moment so I thought I'd better write something. So.

14 min: Well, Spain had done nothing but suddenly they explode into life wonderfully, and nearly score. Xavi springs the German back line with a ball into the left-hand side of the German box where Iniesta awaits; he cuts into the centre and tries to curl it into the top right, but Metzelder gets in the way - and nearly deflects it into the left-hand side of his own net. Lehmann claws brilliantly away for a corner - which is wasted.

17 min: Spain have a free kick 40 yards out. Xavi lumps it into the area in the general direction of Silva, but Lehmann snaffles easily.

18 min: Torres's lack of confidence betrays him; he's set clear down the left and is surely able to power infield, into the box and take a shot on goal - but he decides to check back, allowing Mertesacker to get back and not look as hopeless as he normally does.

19 min: A relative lack of form isn't stopping Torres trying, though. He wins a free kick out right by nutmegging Metzelder and being unceremoniously upended for his trouble. And from the set piece it's Torres who wins a header, though the ball's too high for him to direct it goalward. After a very shaky start indeed, Spain are coming right into this now. It's a reasonably open game without anything particularly fancy going on. It'll do, is what I'm trying to say here.

22 min: Oh me, oh my, Torres is so unlucky there. He jumps majestically to meet a deep cross from the right with his head, and crashes an effort onto the bottom of the left-hand post. He was on the wrong side of Mertesacker but still managed to get there. Superb attempt. The ball rebounds out but there's nobody there to roll it into the empty net. Capdevilla eventually latches onto it 20 yards out, but can only shoot wide. "Can we

suggest some lyrics for the Spanish anthem?" asks Gary Naylor, without waiting for an answer. "I'll start. 'We are the glorious players of Spain / Though our tournament record is terribly plain / It's great to be lined up exercising our lungs / Even if we grow up speaking different tongues'."

25 min: From a German corner, Ballack takes a shot from just inside the area. Sergio Ramos charges the effort down; Germany appeal for a penalty but the ball hit the Spanish defender under his arm. Torso ball! This has now moved from "it'll do" to "this is pretty good, this".

29 min: Down one end, the ball bounces up to Capdevila's hand in his own area; the Germans complain, but come off it. Then Torres tears into the German area; Metzelder comes clumsily bundling in to clank the ball out for a corner, though his attempted tackle was more Broadfoot than Beckenbauer; it looked like he was going to give away a penalty for a second there. The corner is, needless to say, a complete waste of everyone's time. "Spain decided to add words to their national anthem about three months ago," writes Barcelona boy David Cattell. "The only thing the words did was to unite all Spaniards (Catalans, Basques, Madridistas) in their condemnation of the utter rubbish masquerading as a stirring call to patriotism. So the government decided it would be better to forget all about it and hum in a passionate way when the anthem is played."

33 min: SUPERB GOAL!!! Germany 0-1 Spain. Torres has deserved this, and what a finish. He goes tearing down the inside-right channel after a perfectly-weighted ball is rolled towards the German area by Xavi. Lahm chases with Torres but can't get there; Lehmann comes out and can't either. Torres dinks a beautiful chip over the advancing keeper and into the empty net. A beautiful finish. Raul who?

35 min: Torres sweeps down the left and crosses to Silva, free in the area coming in from the right. Instead of calmly taking the ball down, lighting a fag, thinking awhile, then placing it past Lehmann and into the goal, Silva opts to take a wild swipe at the dropping cross and shanks a preposterous effort miles into the air and out of play. What a waste.

38 min: Ballack, who loves the big occasions and even sometimes gets to play in them, is covered in blood. He's taken a whack to his left eye. Oh dear. He's had to go off the pitch to have it pressed by a cotton bud with some Vaseline on it, or whatever it is they do.

40 min: Germany have two attempts at a free kick from out on the right. Neither are any good. Then they win two corners in a row. Again, neither etc etc etc. Does this count as pressure?

42 min: Ballack has the funk on, Raul style, at the moment. He enjoys a bit of a shoving match with Iniesta and Puyol, which is eventually stopped by Casillas, who comes rushing out of his goal to play peacemaker. Much good it does; both Ballack and Casillas are booked for their trouble.

44 min: Spain sweep up the pitch on the break at speed through Senna, Silva, Xavi and then Iniesta, who twists and turns down the left and so nearly makes space to take a shot on goal. He's closed down well by Friedrich, though, and the chance is gone.

Half time: Germany 0-1 Spain. So that's a thoroughly deserved half-time lead for the Spanish. "Does calming down your teammates warrant a yellow card these days?" asks Niamh ni Chonaill. "Is the ref such a coward that to card Ballack (deservedly) he also has to chose a Spaniard, in this case Casillas?" Marie Meyer adds that Ballack "is behaving like a playground bully. I hope Torres has his lunch money well hid."

Where's Raul? An update: "Hola Scott," writes, er, Raul Gonzalez. "Rumours of my mother and father of all funks have been greatly exaggerated. I'm currently following the match, as I always do, via the MBM (big Gary Naylor fan, by the way). Allow me to be the first to congratulate Fernando Torres on his excellent goal. I didn't want to play international football ever again anyway."

And we're off again! Lahm, who can't actually defend, can he, has been replaced by Jansen.

47 min: Klose, chasing a falling ball, is upended just outside the area by Marchena, but he's offside so it makes no odds.

48 min: A quiet start to the half again, and yet again the Germans begin by seeing more of the ball. They are doing eff all with it, mind. "Andy Gray is doing commentary/punditry for ESPN here in the US but keeps ruining the magic of telly by constantly banging on about being in New York and not at the game in Vienna," writes Johnny Mac. "What next? MBM being done out of an office in Farringdon?"

50 min: Ooyah! Oof! Marchena hoofs Klose right in the trousers. That's a fair old Newton's Cradle clack. Poor guy.

53 min: Torres clips the ball back from out right to Xavi in the centre just outside the area. The Spain midfielder takes a swipe; the daisycutter was going just wide left but Lehmann fingertips it out anyway. It's a corner. From which Spain nearly score again, the ball reaching Silva on the right and being dispatched back low and hard across the face of goal and out for a goal kick. Just like in the first half, Spain are slowly beginning to boss it after a slow start.

55 min: Exactly what happened for the first goal, except it's Metzelder instead of the departed Lahm, and Lehmann gets out in time to claim. That was so nearly a second for Torres; it would have been an identical goal.

57 min: Hitzlsperger is replaced by Kevin Kuranyi.

58 min: Ramos whips in a low cross from the right which fizzes low along the face of Lehmann's goal. If anybody was rushing in, that would have been 2-0...

59 min: ... and that was nearly 1-1 as Schweinsteiger chests a high ball in the Spanish area back down to Ballack, who thrashes a superb effort this far wide of Spain's left-hand post, Casillas beaten all ends up.

62 min: Schweinsteiger has a slap goalwards but it's wide. Fabregas, who has been very quiet, is replaced by Xabi Alonso. "Greetings from Bilbao," says Joanna Epstein, who is about to dispense the funnies. "I have to let you know that here in the Basque country, most people root for Spain in secret. How many Basques does it take to root for Spain? Only one, as long as his friends don't know."

64 min: This is hotting up. Podolski is unhappy at a challenge from Silva, and goes nose to nose with the Spanish player. Silva moves his head forward, and could easily have been sent off for that, though then again it was Podolski who injected the heat into the situation in the first place by standing in his opponent's face inviting bother. Common sense prevails and the ref does bugger all.

66 min: Silva is off... but only because he's been immediately substituted by Aragones for Cazorla.

67 min: A free kick is swung into the German area from the right; Ramos meets it with a diving header, Lehmann doing well to parry at point blank range and turn it over. From the corner, Iniesta has a shot from the left-hand corner of the area, Frings being forced to knee off the line.

68 min: It's all Spain this. Lehmann fumbles an Iniesta shot; he breathes again as it's bumbled clear by Friedrich. Germany are hopeless.

71 min: Germany have enjoyed plenty of the ball in the last couple of minutes, but again nothing. One hopeful free kick was swung into the Spanish area, but it was easily punched clear by Casillas. "So we've had the bit where Germany are outplayed," writes Ben Shepherd. "Next, the bit where they win anyway."

73 min: Torres is booked for catching Mertesacker with the back of his head while both were climbing for a high ball. The referee took his time to think about that, only even blowing his whistle for a foul when it was clear Mertesacker wasn't getting back up quickly. The booking Silva should have had?

75 min: Torres is beginning to enjoy a lot of space. He knocks the ball past Metzelder but too close to Lehmann. Then he scampers down the right, only to see his low cross towards Alonso cut out by Jansen.

78 min: Gomes comes on for Klose, Guiza replaces Torres. The latter's arrival is greeted by John Motson's final meltdown on the BBC, as he spends about a minute trying to remember whether the player missed his penalty against Italy or not. I still miss Barry Davies.

80 min: Guiza immediately races after a long ball but is beaten to it by Lehmann, who races off his line, chests the ball past the Spaniard, and hoofs clear. Spain - and their entire bench - claim the keeper handled outside the area. Replays show the ball did sort of brush the side of Lehmann's arm, but they were in front of his chest and it would have been a very harsh call.

81 min: So nearly 2-0: Cazorla pings a cross over from the right, Guiza heads it straight back, and the onrushing Senna is millimeters from toe-poking the ball home into the unguarded net. Will that moment be right up there in what-might-have-been terms with that Paul Gasgoigne semi-final lunge in 1996?

84 min: Guiza, who has been a whirlwind of energy since he came on, wins a corner with a solo bustle down the left. Spain don't do much with it, but they're holding onto possession and pinning a very frustrated Germany side back.

86 min: Spain win a free kick 25 yards out, right in the centre. Xavi's effort is appalling, sailing into the stands. Spain are four minutes away from their first major title since 1964.

87 min: Germany are reduced to lumping it forwards with little or no wit.

88 min: Kuranyi slides in late on Senna, who stays down. That's a booking, for which there is no argument.

89 min: Simply abysmal defending from Metzelder, who rolls the ball slowly to Carzola; a quicker pass from the Spanish winger would have freed Guiza in the centre. Luckily for Metzelder, the poor man's Kirk Broadfoot, the danger is eventually cleared by someone else.

90 min: Germany claim a penalty but it's a foul by Schweinsteiger on Marchena. Or was it Capdevilla? Not sure. There are g

oing to be three more minutes of this.

90 min +2: Spain are nearly there, keeping the ball in Germany's half. Alonso nearly gets a chance for a shot on goal but Lehmann smothers well. "What-might-have-been (81 mins) is the Czech Republic would have won Euro 96," notes Mac Millings. He's not wrong, is he.

SPAIN ARE THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS!!! Germany 0-1 Spain. They deserved that. Torres races onto the pitch looking very pleased with himself, which let's face it is fair enough. "On the positive side for Germany, this should give Low plenty of subject matter for some Emo poetry," suggests David Wall. Maybe he can pen a few stanzas with Raul.

Motson signs off with a cracker: "Michael Ballack's record in finals is getting embarrassing."

The sorry truth dawns: This, of course, now means the title of Perennial Hapless Comedy Under-Achievers in international football is vacant. Who could step up to the plate for that, do you think?

The presentation ceremony: They want to bloody well get on with it, is what I'm suggesting. It eventually begins. The referee and his cohorts stomp up some bespoke presentations stairs and shake hands with Michel Platini. Next up its the Germans, who have to walk through a Spanish guard of honour which in no way rubs it in. Dear me.

"The European champions... Spppppppaaaaiiiinnnn!" It's nice to know that needy idiots are let loose on PA systems to spoil presentation ceremonies in Europe as well as at home. Amid the wanton screaming and shouting, the squad, plus Aragones, pick up their medals from Platini... then Casillas hoists the Henri Delaunay Trophy into the sky. At which point a particularly poor firework display starts: a puff of smoke and a few silvery bits fly about, and that's it. It's as though somebody has just sneezed into a full ashtray. Anyway, congratulations to Spain, who thoroughly deserved to win both the final and the tournament as a whole. Commiserations, meanwhile, to both Germany and Raul.