

**WUT2018**  
**IX International Conference “Word, Utterance, Text:  
Cognitive, Pragmatic and Cultural Aspects”**

**PECULIARITIES OF ITALIAN FOOTBALL REPORTAGE AS A  
PUBLICISTIC GENRE**

Bobnev B.A. (a)\*, Digena O.L. (b)

\*Corresponding Author

(a) PhD in Philology, Associate Professor, Department of Romance and Germanic languages and intercultural communication, Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, bor337@mail.ru, +79080528337

(b) PhD in Pedagogics, Associate Professor, Head of Department of foreign languages, Chelyabinsk State Institute of Culture, Chelyabinsk, Russia, ol.digena@yandex.ru, +79080444336

*Abstract*

In the article, peculiarities of the Italian football reportage as a publicistic genre are considered. In the center of our research, there are linguistic means that reflect the specifics and colour of the Italian mentality, including the linguistic personality of the commentator. Football for Italians is not just a game, but also a part of life or even life itself. Amateur football in Italy is a part of the overall structure of Italian football, embracing everyone who wants to participate in this sport game. Football, as a national sport in Italy, receives wide coverage in the media, and football reportage is most popular with the Italian audience. Italian football reportage is considered in the work through its classical structure such as "introduction - the main part - the conclusion," which formally restrains the emotional, often chaotic speech form of the commentary itself, reflecting the unpredictable dynamics of the game. The language of the football report is characterized by a specific imagery, rich in epithets, comparisons, hyperbole and especially metaphors. At the level of syntax, there are often rhetorical questions that create the illusion of a dialogue with the viewer, repetitions conveying the tension of speech and involving the viewer in empathy of one or another moment, an inverted word order, single-sentence sentences in the form of a parcel of brief and jerky sentences.

© 2018 Published by FutureAcademywww.FutureAcademy.org.UK

**Keywords:** Italian football, commenting structure, commentator's communicative putting, linguistic personality.



## 1. Introduction

Football reportage is one of the main genres in the structure of mass media. A journalistic genre of the reportage goes back to the notion of speech genres defined by M.M. Bakhtin "as relatively stable types of propositions" (Bakhtin, 1997). The purpose of the football reportage is to give the audience an opportunity to see the described sport event through the eyes of the commentator as an eyewitness. The personal perception of the sport event is on the foreground of the reportage, the author of the report appears as an active observer and commentator of the action.

It is known that the reportage as a journalistic genre that gives a visual representation of an event through direct perception of the author can be eventual, analytical, or problematic, cognitive-thematic and a reportage-commentary (Maidanova, Duskaeva, 2006).

Football reportage is, of course, a reportage-commentary with the elements listed and described in the Stylistic Encyclopedic Dictionary of Types and according to N.B. Popova this is a "mixed genre, which is a detailed and eventful commentary of the informational-analytical type, reflecting a vivid author's position addressed to a mass addressee" (Popova, 2017).

The peculiarity of any sport reportage, including a football one, is that the event of the upcoming match is known in advance, and a journalist-commentator has the opportunity to prepare for it, collect the necessary material in order to "weave" it into the main part of the eventful commentary

## 2. Problem Statement

The subject of this study is the Italian football reportage as a publicistic genre, being an important part of the Italian mass media. Football is very important for Italians, It's not just a game, it's a part of their lives or even life itself.

The behaviour of the players during the match reveals the temperament of the Italians: they scream, gesture, sometimes they use impermissible techniques during the game. At the same time, the Italian player can even become famous for his impermissible techniques. Italian fans (tiffosi) are also expressive. During the game of the Italian teams, they are rampant in the stands; welcome their idols, sometimes insulting rivals in their "chants". Almost every citizen in Italy is crazy about football. Therefore, amateur football in Italy is a part of the overall structure of Italian football, thus embracing everyone who wants to participate in this sport game.

The system of Italian football looks like a pyramid based on amateur football. The lowest 10th league has the largest number of divisions and clubs in it. Then after the selection there are 9th and 10th leagues. This is the first amateur level, or category, of Italian football. The next category consists of the 7th, 6th and the 5th amateur leagues being transitional to the professional level. And only after six amateur leagues begins the Italian professional football. In Italy, there are a huge number of clubs that are part of the leagues of amateur and professional football, among which the most famous are Juventus, Milan, Lazio, Napoli, Inter, and Roma.

The material of our research was the reportages of the world football championships performed by such well-known Italian commentators as Martellini, Pizzul and Cucchi.

Note that the communicative setting of the football commentator is not only to convey the eventful information of the game process, but also its intensity and excitement. In this case, as has already been noted, the attitude of Italians to football (players, fans, commentators) is very emotional. Specific features in the speech of sports commentators, noticed by the researcher of sports discourse E.G. Malysheva, allowed her to distinguish such communicative types of commentators as "reporter", "analyst", "connoisseur", "ironic", "joker", "actor", "fan" (Malysheva, 2011). It will be interesting to determine at the end of this research, to which type the Italian football commentator can be attributed.

### **3. Research Questions**

The material of the research is Italian football reportage that reflects the mentality of Italian people. Taking it into consideration the research questions are as follows:

- 1) research of the specific material of Italian reportages determining the degree of the game tension at different text levels (lexical, morphological, syntactic);
- 2) the definition of the communicative type of the Italian commentator in the light of the multi-purpose installation of the reportage as a publicistic genre;
- 3) taking into consideration the ability of commentators to prepare for the upcoming match in advance, it is interesting to follow the variations of the literary normativeness of word usage and emotional deviations from the literary norm in the structure of the whole football match.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the work is to consider the discursive features of the Italian football reportage as a publicistic genre of Italian mass media.

In accordance with the purpose, the article defines the special role of football for Italy, both for players and spectators, describes a complex system of amateur and professional football, and defines the linguistic personality of the Italian football commentator through the analysis of structural, compositional, lexico-semantic and syntactic peculiarities of the Italian football reportage.

### **5. Research Methods**

To solve the problems posed in the study, a number of research methods were used.

They are theoretical methods (a classification and systematization method, a generalization and systematization method, a comparative method, forecasting, modelling); empirical methods (an observation, method of experiment, a method of expert evaluation, evaluation and analysis of products of activity, study and generalization of pedagogical experience); statistical analysis methods.

### **6. Findings**

**6.1.** The football reportage in this work is considered from the point of view of the lexical and semantic functioning of its units within the framework of the classical standard construction of the type

"introduction - main part - conclusion" in order to identify the national component of the linguistic personality of the Italian commentator.

The introduction of the football reportage is the length of time from direct inclusion to the moment when the actual game begins. The commentator welcomes the viewers, introduces himself, the status of the match, the place of the match, the date and represents the team. These are traditionally well-established forms, which simultaneously allow the commentator to enter this or that important information or personal assessment.

This is how Bruno Pizzul begins his reportage in the final match "Napoli" - "Stuttgart" at the UEFA Cup 1989:

(1) «Buona sera gentili ascoltatori dallo stadio San Paolo di Napoli! Buona sera da Bruno Pizzul. Una straordinaria avventura della squadra napoletana che gioca stasera con la Stoccarda, la finale di Coppa Uefa. 2:1 il risultato della match d'andata a San Paolo». (*Good evening, dear listeners! Good evening from Naples, the stadium of San Paolo! Bruno Pizzul welcomes you! An unusual adventure of the Neapolitan team, which plays tonight with Stuttgart, in the final of the UEFA Cup. 2:1 is the result of the entry match in San Paolo.*)

The same Bruno Pizzul in his report of the final match Milan - Barcelona UEFA Champions League on May 18, 1994, in addition to the standard presentation of himself as a commentator and the upcoming match, emotionally figuratively describes what is happening in the stands:

(2) «Lo stadio è stato liberalmente invaso dai tifosi napoletani, giunti da ogni parte d'Italia ma anche da ogni parte dalla Germania, dalla Francia. Veramente un clima di festa. L'immediata vigilia è stata caratterizzata dall'attesa della presenza o meno di Careca, Careca è in campo. Uno spettacolo straordinario nelle tribune con vessilli azzurri dei napoletani che si sono riuniti in particolare sulle curve ma anche un po' dovunque nello stadio». (*The stadium was won by the fans of the team "Napoli", who came from different parts of Italy, as well as Germany and France. A real holiday atmosphere. On the eve of the match, everyone was waiting for the presence of football player Kareka, and now Kareka is on the field. An unusual spectacle of azure in the form of a rainbow arc from the stands and across the stadium from fans dressed in blue.*)

Representation of teams and some particularly significant players is as follows:

(3) «Nella casacca azzurra il Napoli, nella maglia bianca con linea trasversa le rossa - Stoccarda». (*The Napoli team is In blue T-shirts, and Stuttgart is in white T-shirts with a red strip.*)

(4) «Vedete l'arbitro con due capitani: Allgöwer e Maradona per le operazioni preliminari. Vedete le telecamere che soffermano con particolare l'attenzione su Maradona». (*You see a judge with two captains: Allgöwer and Maradona for preliminary actions. You see TV cameras pay special attention to Maradona.*)

In the introduction of Bruno Pizzul's football reportage, one can often notice his personal ironic assessment of the opposing team:

(5) «In pratica i colleghi tedeschi dopo aver sempre stigmatizzato il vittimismo degli italiani, hanno a loro volta usato la politica della lacrimuccia della lamentazione nell'evidente tentativo di influenzare l'arbitro di questa sera chi è lo spagnolo Sanchez Arminio. Tutto questo per impadronire l'ambiente». (*In fact, German colleagues have always branded the victim's behavior of the Italians, and this time they*

themselves used the "politics of crybaby and sneak" trying to influence the referee's decision, Spaniard Sánchez Arminio. Everything in order to take possession of the situation).

In general, the introductory speech is logical and normative, as can be seen by the syntax of comprehensive and complete sentences. There are enough clear and traditional tropes: straordinaria avventura, spettacolo straordinario, colleghi tedeschi, impadronire l'ambiente, which retained their expressiveness and representativeness in the context. The difference from the neutral mode of expression is, on the one hand, the poetic image of the Italian fans in the form of an azure rainbow passing through the stands, and on the other - the ironic use of an expanded paraphrase with the colloquial model lacrimuccia from the word "tear" in the metaphor lacrimuccia della lamentazione (such as a disparaging "plaintive teardash") concerning "German colleagues".

**6.2.** Commentary of the main part of the match, which includes two periods of 45 minutes, almost does not provide an opportunity for the commentator to use the prepared material or phrases. This is a transfer by the commentator of purely situational and sometimes instant actions. Therefore the main part of the commentary is the most emotional and unpredictable part of the reportage.

Examples from Bruno Pizzul:

(6) «E subito un lancio profondissimo di Sigurvinsson, sorveglia la situazione a Renica e gira. Palla per Maradona!.. Fuori!». (*And immediately a distant shot of Sigurvinsson, ... Renica follows the situation ... bypasses the opponent .... The ball of Maradona! ... Out!*)

(7) «Gentile,... Conti, contropiede,... siamo in vantaggio,... va in avanti, Conti,.. traversa Altobelli!». (*Gentile, ... Conti ... goes on a fast counterattack, ... the advantage is with us, Conti ... comes forward ... crosses Altobelli!*)

Commentator Riccardo Cucchi more calmly comments on the game of the Italian player during the UEFA Champions League match on May 18, 1994:

(8) «La palla è del Milan con Donadoni, buono il suo movimento! La combinazione con Messaro tentativo di triangolo lungo, e ancora Donadoni ha fermato la palla laterale. È un buon Milan! È un buon Milan soprattutto direi per la partenza di Donadoni. La fantasia c'è, l'ispirazione la vediamo soprattutto sulle fasce laterali, speriamo che duri». (*The ball at Milan, headed by Donadoni, is moving at a good pace! Combination with Messaro is in an attempt of a long pass, and again Donadoni intercepts the side ball. Good Milan! Good, thanks to Donadoni's game. He has fantasy and inspiration, especially we see it on the sidelines. We hope they are for a long time.*)

(9) And another example: «Al parer mio Peruzzi è stato bravissimo, non ci ha lasciato ingannare, ha fatto un bravissimo passo ed ha ribattuto con un tiro forte Davids, molto bene!». (*In my opinion, Peruzzi is a fine fellow, he did not deceive us, made a wonderful pass and answered Davids with an excellent penalty.*)

As you can see, in the main part of the reportage, Bruno Pizzul's speech is intermittent, parcellular, emotional, with repeated names of players and adverbs. Repetitions seem to reflect the "heat of passion." Although in general, the main part of the reportage is the factographic segments of the observation of the match.

As for Riccardo Cucchi, this is a classic factographic description of the match, consisting of logically finished segments of speech, with restrained assessments, where we can observe tropes, for example, metonymic "Good Milan"!

**6.3.** The commentary of the final part of the match is characterized by shortness and dynamism. Commentators summarize the results, represent themselves again and say goodbye to the viewers, which does not prevent them from giving their emotional assessment.

(10) For example, Bruno Pizzul at the end of the winning match is very eloquent: «È stata una grande lotta di calcio gentili ascoltatori. E Napoli così ottiene la vittoria, una vittoria estremamente sofferta. Speriamo che adesso la vittoria abbia dato un po' di respiro e anche un po' di voce ai giocatori e ai protagonisti in campo. È finita 2:1, cari ascoltatori, grazie allo studio. Infine l'augurio di una serena notte». (*It was a great football battle, dear listeners! Thus, Napoli wins the victory, a truly suffered victory. We hope that now the victory will give a breath of air and a bit of a voice to the players and the main heroes on the field. Result is 2:1, dear listeners, thanks to the studio. I wish you good night!*)

At the level of syntax, the emotionality of Bruno Pizzul is noticeably normalized: the sentences are all completed, including the exclamation form. On the lexico-semantic level, however, we meet expressive tropes that reflect its specific linguistic personality (metaphors, hyperbolas, epithets): una vittoria estremamente sofferta, una grande lotta di calcio, la vittoria abbia dato un po 'di respiro, etc.

## 7. Conclusion

The analyzed material allows us to note that the language of the football reportage is extremely emotional, which is typical for spoken Italian as a whole (Bobnev, 2016). The above tropes and figures increase the imagery and expressiveness of the speech sounded in the air, transmit evaluative and emotionally expressive meanings. Basically all the commentators are of the fan-commentator type, although in some different extent, judging by the emotional comments of Bruno Pizzul in comparison with the reportages of Riccardo Cucchi.

## References

- Bakhtin, M.M. (1997). The Problem of Speech Genres. *Collected Works. - V. 5: Works of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1960s.* – Moscow, 159-206.
- Bobnev, B.A. (2016). Structural and semantic features of suffixal word formation in spoken Italian. *Language and culture.* Chelyabinsk, 8-14.
- Maidanova, L.M., Duskaeva, L.R. (2006). Genres of publicistic. *The Stylistic Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Russian Language.* Moscow.
- Malysheva, E.G. (2011). The discursive linguistic personality in the Russian sports discourse. *Electronic scientific journal "MediaScope", Mediastilistics. Issue № 1.*
- Popova, N.B. (2017). Communicative and speech strategies of reportage as a genre of sports media discourse. *Bulletin of the Chelyabinsk State University. Philological Sciences. Issue 110. No. 12 (408),* 159-165.