



THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOTBALL AND ITS BASIC CHALLENGES IN LINGUISTIC POINT OF VIEW

Khasanov Zafar Bakhtiyorovich

Deputy Dean For Youth Issues And Spiritual-Educational Affairs At Uswlu

Abstract: Soccer, or football, is a widely known sport in many countries. In broadcasted matches, announcers (or commentators) have an important role of delivering the occurrences of the match to the audience. Since sport announcers' language form has its own uniqueness, sport announcers' language style is considered as a set of register called Sport Announcer's Talk (SAT). This article is based on finding out the Individual Linguistic Features in the register of sport announcers. The study was done through transcribing the commentaries of certain matches and then categorizing the utterances into the proper Individual Linguistic Features.

Key words: Football, commentary, commentators, register, individual linguistic features and terms

Football (British English) or Soccer (American English) is said to be one of the most well-known sport across countries. Many people are fond of this sport. In fact, there are a lot of countries that already have their own football league. Football has also been broadcasted internationally; nowadays, we can watch a football match in other countries from our television, or just simply stream it via Internet. In football broadcast, two commentators are hired to give explanation about the progress of the match. Lewandowski (2008) explains that these commentators consist of a play-by-play commentator and a color commentator. A play-by-play commentator has the duty of delivering a detailed process of what happened in the match; this kind of commentator is usually an expert commentator who knows when and what to say during a particular time. On the other hand, a color commentator is usually a former player or coach whose duty is to give a summary of an event that occurs in the match and to explain to the audiences about what happens in the match based on the players' point of view. The language of the football commentary itself has their own uniqueness. For example, football commentary is very seldom in using a complete sentence due to the time pressure in delivering the speech. According to Lewandowski (2012), a football commentary contains a lot of unfinished utterances and interruptions. Therefore, the discourse of a football commentary does not have a lot of coherence.

Furthermore, football commentary is considered to be a branch of a language register called Sport Announcers Talk (SAT) register. Lewandowski (2008) argues that the language of football itself can also be considered as a register instead of a sociolect due to its use that is bound to a particular time and situations rather than habitual use. Furthermore, BalzerSiber (2015) introduces the term „individual linguistic features“ as he adapts the so-called „linguistic routines“ from Ferguson (1983) in his study toward SAT. These individual linguistic features are Simplification, Subject-Dependent Inversion, Result Expressions, Heavy Modifiers, Diminutive Elements, Deictic Adverbs as Signposting Devices, and Discourse Deixis. This study aimed to find out the individual linguistic features of Barclays Premier League (BPL)

football commentary. In other words, this study wanted to find the answer to the following research question: “What are the linguistic features used in BPL football commentary”. It was expected that the results of this study would help the English language learners to understand the language structure of BPL football commentary and to contribute in the field of Sociolinguistics, particularly on registers.

Football has developed a voracious appetite for stealing, commandeering and recycling phrases from elsewhere for its own (invariably clumsy) purposes. The game possesses a surprising number of obsolete words that originated elsewhere but still flourish here. It doesn't require much sticking out of the neck to suggest that most football fans wouldn't use stalwart, profligate, adjudged, diminutive or the verbal form of rifle if those words hadn't been given a new lease of life in their adopted sporting context. Nor would they ever describe something being done with aplomb, while only the engineers among us could identify a real-life slide rule.

While breathless broadcasting is responsible for the more questionable and ham-fisted football clichés, the printed word is where the more refined part of the football vernacular has slowly been allowed to mature over generations. Millions of match reports have had to find a variety of ways to describe goals, horror tackles and emphatic victories. However, just as a co-commentator must hurriedly cobble together a coherent sentence, newspaper editors have to work within strict limits on their back pages. Economy of space has promoted the use of certain words that are ubiquitous in tabloid headlines in particular, but which you could never say out loud with a straight face (unless you're a Sky Sports News presenter).

Footballers love to be in the headlines, unless it's for all the wrong reasons. In an era when pretty much anything players do, on or off the pitch, is liable to be shoehorned into a red-top or internet headline, the football media has developed a set of space-saving keywords (mostly of no more than three to five letters) that account for any incident:

1. **Ace**-Where better to start than with the ace? Despite its elite connotations, aceness is a conveniently fluid concept in the world of newspaper headlines. Premier League youth-teamers convicted of driving offences or League Two players caught in compromising situations in hotels qualify as aces on the basis of sensationalism alone, to the point where using the word to describe those genuinely at the pinnacle of the game seems woefully insufficient.
2. **Axe**-The most excruciating wait to be put out of one's misery is when a beleaguered manager (or boss, for these purposes) faces the axe. In the interests of pedantry, it should be emphasised that managers are never ultimately hit by the axe, they are simply axed. It can also be used to describe players being dropped from the squad – not only are they axed, but they are also frozen out. It's a cruel world.
3. **Bid**-Normally associated with proposed transfer deals, bid can also appear as a synonym for a team's efforts to achieve a season-long goal (such as the league title), but without quite the focused determination of a vow.
4. **Blast**-A vitriolic burst of criticism, with various possible sources or targets – often a poor, defenceless referee.
5. **Blow**-A disappointing event, invariably associated with injuries. The hammer blow, however, is exclusive to title bids.
6. **Boost**-The polar opposite of a blow.
7. **Coy**-“Tight-lipped” managers remain coy when asked about new signings – talking about players at other clubs (like talking about referees) is something managers go out of their way to say they don't do while still actually doing it anyway.

8. **Dent**-A type of blow, but one that only affects a bid or someone's hopes and rarely terminal (unlike, say, a hammer blow or a derailing).
9. **Eye**-Eyeing is the more voyeuristic equivalent of keeping tabs on a player, before mulling over a bid.
10. **Exit**-The departure from a cup competition. If the circumstances are calamitous enough, clubs can also crash out of a cup, or even be unceremoniously dumped out. Any of which may usher their manager towards the exit door.
11. **Faces**-After a controversial incident, but before its punishment is meted out, the accused player or club (or soon-to-be-axed manager) will be held in the purgatory of simply facing their fate.
12. **Hails**-Steve Bruce, in 1985, holding up a report in which he is hailed. Victorious managers feel compelled to hail a collective or individual performance, or the vocal support of the (no doubt magnificent) fans.
13. **Held**-Form-book defying stalemates usually involve a frustrated side being held. Sufficiently vague for use with any type of draw, regardless of who scored first or if it was a 0-0 stalemate.
14. **Hit**-After facing an FA probe and taking the subsequent rap, the miscreant can then be hit with a fine (or, indeed, slapped with a ban). Also used as shorthand for impressive goalscoring feats ('Ronaldo hits four in Real rout') or specifically sized capitulations ('Droylsden hit for six').
15. **Jibe**-The traditionally sneaky opening move in a bout of mind games, which can escalate to a war of words.
16. **Joy**-Exploiting its diminutive stature to the full, joy is the weapon of choice to describe a manager's/player's happiness.
17. **Probe**-The expected preliminary investigations of the FA (or, in more extreme cases, the police) which are invariably faced before they are launched.
18. **Raid**-The act of managers returning to recent former employers to cherry-pick their favourite players, ideally in one single deal. Suggests a certain cynicism from the bidding club, and a level of helplessness on the part of the seller.
19. **Rap**-A cult favourite, this diminutive word is far catchier than 'disciplinary proceedings'. An FA probe inevitably leads to an FA rap, two headline-friendly terms that cannot help but conjure up images rather different to their intended meaning. Such disciplinary proceedings attempt to bring closure to an ongoing row of some sort, be it a mere war of words or a full-blown, I'd-rather-be-punched-in-the-face spit-spat. Even the most serious issues such as race rows are effectively trivialised for the purposes of alliteration.
20. **Seal**-The rubber-stamping of a transfer deal (protracted or otherwise) or the relatively untroubled progression of a club to the next round of a cup competition.
21. **Vow**-Nobody in football promises to do anything, they always vow – silencing the boo-boys is a common vow, as is a player's repaying of a manager's faith.

Emphatic score lines also lend themselves to catchy headlines involving vaguely familiar phrases of unclear origin. The fun begins at around the four-goal mark, with a handy hotel-rating analogy:

Four goals = FOUR-STAR

Five goals = FIVE-STAR



Six goals = JOY OF SIX/HIT FOR SIX/SIX OF THE BEST

Seven goals = SEVENTH HEAVEN/SEVEN-UP

Eight goals = (no cliché allocated, although GR-8 is making a spirited, if clumsy, attempt to establish itself in recent seasons)

Nine goals = CLOUD NINE

Naturally, we all want to know who the protagonists are in the latest football pantomime, so desperate red-top headline writers can be seen to resort to painful, puzzling abbreviations such as MOU, WENG or the punned-to-within-an-inch-of-its-life ROO. You won't have to look too hard in tomorrow's papers to find these three- and four-letter codewords and, once you've started spotting them, the more ridiculous they will start to look. Unless the FA's disciplinary panel really are spitting sick rhymes from an orbiting space module.

Elsewhere, football's surprisingly subtle relationship with grammar bears curious fruit. While the animal world enjoys an innumerable complement of collective nouns, ranging from the wonderfully alliterative to the impenetrably obscure, you may not be surprised to learn that football has quite a few of its own. For reasons of sensationalism, laziness, inaccuracy or simply diversity, football coverage has demanded that a selection of collective nouns be made available, to be drawn from whenever appropriate.

In conclusion, football is one of the most popular games on the planet, and one that is played, watched and obsessed over by billions of people worldwide, children and adults alike. It's a sport that spans continents and transcends social class, with a ball and two jumpers for goalposts all that's needed to take part in the beautiful game we know and love. Since its inception, the game has grown from relatively humble beginnings to become a multi-billion-dollar business, with players earning unthinkable sums of money on a weekly basis. Indeed, the modern-day soccer sphere is in many ways in a world of its own, with defined hierarchies, financial structures and agendas. However, it is the language of football we are most interested in from overused clichés to forgotten terms and phrases, read on to find out more.

References:

1. Agha, A. (2004). *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
2. Balzer-Siber, M. (2015). Functional and Stylistic Features of Sports Announcers Talk: A Discourse Analysis of the Register of Major League Soccer Television Broadcast. 1-67.
3. Biber, D. (1995). *Dimension of Register Variation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
4. Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2009). *Register, Genre, and Style*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
5. Desmarais, F., & Bruce, T. (2009). The Power of the Local in Sports Broadcasting: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Rugby Commentary. *International Journal of Sport Communication*. 129-145.
6. Humpolík, R. (2014). Language of Football Commentators: An Analysis of Live English Football Commentary and its Types. 1-56.