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ENGLISH IN FIGURE SKATING BROADCAST

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INTRODUCTION

The earliest mention of ice-skating dates back to 3000 B.C. Although the sports broadcasting itself started much later in 1911, in Lawrence, Kansas, we are able to conclude that the slang of the aforementioned sport fans most likely have been created around 3000 B.C. Therefore, it is necessary to examine and investigate the matter of the overall development of the voiced and texted sports broadcast throughout the years.

Nowadays, there is a large number of different kinds of websites demonstrating both written, and oral commentary of various sports events. As a matter of fact, we can consider www.eurosport.com <https://uk.eurosport.yahoo.com> www.bbc.co.uk/sport or even www.youtube.com as the major sources of video, voice and text reports. Since communication is what matters most to us, athletics adds a unique layer of culture to society. According to T.A. van Dijk's definition, discourse is interpreted as a social reality, a speech flow; a language that is always changing, absorbing the diversity of its historical era as well as the communicants and the unique characteristics of the communicative context. That leads us to the fact that discourse evidently is a mirror image of culture and mentality, both universal and individual [7]. Thus, as a component of culture that conveys broader cultural trends and viewpoints, sports occupy a special role in society and communication. As a result, speech and sports have a significant impact on how different historical eras, communicators, and communicative situations are reflected, underscoring their importance as fundamental elements of culture and communication.

Recently, sports broadcasts have become increasingly popular. The speech of the broadcaster is of interest for linguistic research. Sports commentary consists of an analysis of current events, establishing cause-and-effect relationships between them and predicting their consequences. Studying the features of the speech of a sports commentator allows you to understand how the report is built and by what means the reporter makes his report interesting and attractive to the listener.

The **object** of the research is the way the English language is used in figure skating broadcast.

The **subject** of the research are the characteristics of literary, oral, and communicative components of sports competitions, particularly figure skating.

The **theoretical basis** of the research are the works of Ukrainian and foreign authors on the theory of text and video sport broadcast and the peculiarities of this phenomenon (V. Barchuk, A.V. Husev, O. Kolupaeva, D. Crystal, M. Lewandowski, K. Kuiper) and on the theory of figure skating and other sports discourse and commentary (T. Ed, O.V. Babenko, A.B. Zilbert).

Numerous examples of broadcast material were analyzed during the research. In particular, 6 replays (24 hours of material) of English-language video broadcasts posted on the sites <https://olympics.com> and <https://www.youtube.com>. The collected material for the research dates from 2018 to 2022; for the theoretical part, material concerning figure skating commentary and broadcast was selected based on the criteria of popularity and number of text and video broadcasts on English-language sports websites.

The relevance of the research is connected with the study of the structural and semantic organization of the commentary and with the study of effective forms and methods of coverage of a sporting event. The linguistic and semantic features of the commentary are of interest to many linguists who study various forms of discourse and communication. Furthermore, thanks to the special role of television, billions of people are now involved in sports communication.

The purpose of writing the paper is to analyze the use of various texted and video materials in the English language, the lexical particularities and key definitions pertaining to the topic. To achieve desired result in work, one should solve the following tasks: 1) consider the essence of the texted, video and audio broadcast, their types and functions 2) define and highlight the main areas of research of key concepts of communicative linguistics, namely speech genre and sports discourse 3) analyze the language means in the context of broadcasts of

figure skating, their comparison, evaluation of functions in terms of expressing the main content and subtext.

The novelty of the coursework lies in its potential to contribute to the understanding of the ways in which language is used in sportscasting, particularly figure skating, and the impact of linguistic choices on the perception and interpretation of figure skating performances. Additionally, this coursework could contribute to the development of new methodologies and approaches for studying language use in sportscasting and pave the way for further research in this area, as it remains only partially investigated.

The first part of our study begins with a detailed definition of the notion of texted and video sports broadcast; the history and development of particularities of speech. The second part of our research work presents a study of various types of text and video material of figure skating broadcast in accordance with their classification, linguistics peculiarities they possess, and the leading functions of each type.

1. Sports commentary as a phenomenon of linguistics

1.1. History of sports commentary

The concept of "reportage" or "commentary" arose in the first half of the 19th century, and comes from the Latin word "reportare", which means "to convey", "to inform". Otherwise, it can come from the Latin word "comminisci" meaning "to devise", "to contrive". Initially, publications that informed the reader about the progress of court hearings, parliamentary debates, and various meetings were called reportage. Later, such "reportages" began to be called "reports". A publication of a different type began to be called "commentaries", that is, those that are similar in content and form to modern essays. It is Western essays that are the genetic predecessors and closest "relatives" of modern reportage. The originality of publications belonging to the genre of reportage arises primarily as a result of the extensive application of the method of observation and fixation in the text of its progress and results [37]. Now reportage is one of the main information genres, it is also called the king of information genres. It is characterized by strict documentation, efficiency, dynamics, brightness, emotionality and subjectivity, which gives information visual signs of visibility.

The socio-cultural aspect in characterizing and assessing the state and level of public broadcasting is one of the key, defining ones (by public broadcasting we understand the language practice of society at all structural levels of the nation-state community, which has an individual-collective nature and represents a mass information space). Today, the concept of "public broadcasting" includes, first of all, media content: that is the name of television or radio organizations with public sources of funding, which is an alternative form to state or private media structures, which, according to general belief, present trending sources of information [23].

The biggest factor that had an effect on sports commentary's development and implementation in everyday life of people was the invention of radio and television. Therefore, all the sport events were to be broadcast and soon enough the

commentary was added to it. As David Crystal points out, the commentary deals with a big number of descriptions and explanations. Sometimes it is needed that the commentator adds supplementary information to refine the text and make it understandable. Otherwise, in spoken English the need for vivid description can be so strong that it makes explanations and opinions reduced to minimum [4].

Although sports commentary and its slang appeared many years ago, the sports broadcast did not reach its British audience until the middle of 1950s, when it became one of the responses to the commercial nature of BBC's television [11]. On the other hand, one does encounter many firsts of broadcasting held directly in the USA. To start with, the world's first *voice* broadcast was done by a licensed radio station on November 2, 1920. The US goes as far as to hire the first full-time radio announcer by the name of Harold W. Arlin, who succeeded not only in commenting broadcasts of baseball games, tennis matches, football games and boxing matches, but also the 1920 presidential elections. The first *radio* broadcast, in turn, also happened to be announced by Harold W. Arlin on August 5, 1921 [47]. After that, he went on the air with a commentary on football matches. Arlin's commentary activity was very successful, his work was broadcast not only in the USA, but also in Europe. In 1925, The Times called commentator Harold Arlin "the most famous American voice in Europe" [32].

By the time of the advent of television - the main competitor of radio - certain traditions of radio commentary had already developed. At the same time, a specific system of informing the audience about sporting events was formed. This experience has been applied to television. It was on television that the sports commentary genre took on the form we associate it with today.

The world's first television broadcast of a sports match took place on May 17, 1939 in the United States. A Columbia-Princeton baseball game served as the first ever television broadcast material for a sports match and was carried to some 400 sets capable of receiving the broadcast signal. Then the American company NBC (National Broadcasting Company) broadcast two student baseball games, which were commented by Bill Stern [43].

While there is not much information on the first ever figure skating broadcast, one may say it started as early as 1910 at the Skating Championship at Stockholm, Sweden, where it was practiced in a competition held by the International Skating Union. One of the most famous and popular figure skating commentators of all time could be Richard “Dick” Button, who pioneered the role, having “no idea what an expert commentator was supposed to do...”; creating the technique of anticipating the move before it happened, rather than commenting after it happened. He did so by tracking down the coaches and the skaters most of all to determine the order of their moves [46]. However, nowadays two most known commentators remain Tara Lipinski and Johnny Weir. It is worth noting that all three of them were at some point in their life either winners or participants of the figure skating contests [44].

To conclude, the contemporary communicative space, constantly creating and sharing new information, is under the influence of the overall development of the world and sociopolitical priorities of the public, showing its permanent dynamic state. The creation of commentary can be considered one of the oldest and universal tendencies of the language, be it verbal or non-verbal. The basis of event reporting is, on the one hand, sports events that require prompt coverage, and on the other hand, those that require in-depth analysis and study. This determines the selection of the most vivid and significant elements of the event, as well as their display through dynamic action or through the description of internal tension. It is especially important for event reporting creating the ‘effect of presence’. The reader must see the event through the eyes of the author; empathize with him the drama of the development of this or that situation; visually imagine the time and place of the reporting action.

1.2. The notion of sports commentary and its typology

"Commentary" is described as "an expression of opinions or offering of explanations about an event or situation" in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.), it can also refer to a literary writing that is "typically expository or interpretive." [48]. Otherwise, commentary can be looked at as "A set of comments on or explanations of a particular subject, especially as a book or broadcast" [49]. Now, Crystal and Davy state that the term "commentary" is commonly defined as "a verbal recount of real occurrences" [4]. However, this is a pretty wide concept that can apply to numerous linguistic acts. In such a case, perhaps a more appropriate term, sportscasting, would be employed, which Ferguson [8] has already applied in this context. He defines sportscasting as the oral reporting of a live athletic event accompanied with color commentary. Color commentary is an essential component of the genre and so cannot be excluded from its description. The further part of the research will go into color commentary in further detail. First and foremost, Ferguson suggests that sportscasting is a "monolog or a dialog-on-stage" that is aimed at an audience that is unseen and unknown to the commentator, while also being heterogeneous [8, p. 153] who is listening to it knowingly and willingly and even though they do not provide the sportscaster with any reaction, it all makes them clearly a part of the dialogue because these statements and utterances are being made in their direction. The sportscaster's job is to tell the audience on what is going on in the field, or in our case, the rink. This reporting must correlate with real-time occurrences, and because ice skating is a rather quick activity, the task frequently becomes difficult. Many academics that have worked with sport announcer's talk (SAT) (for example Crystal and Davy [4]; Ferguson [8]; Delin [5], Müller [16]) consequently established SAT's two primary levels of language, the play-by-play reporting (PP) and colour commentary (CC). Other levels, most notably Delin's assessment and summary, have been added by certain researchers. Nonetheless, "description of activity and giving of background information have been identified as critically significant components" of the sportscaster's duty [4, p. 130]. The difference

between the two is most noticeable when there are two sportscasters commentating on a game, one of whom is the primary (play-by-play) commentator, who talks more and summarizes the happenings, and the co-commentator (color commentator, expert summarizer), who goes into greater detail about the current subject and offers his comments on the game. Majority of the ice-skating commentary cases, however, rarely include 2 commentators and mostly concentrate on the events as they are happening. It is worth mentioning though that a sportscaster commenting ice skating would most likely go into detail about the overall results of other participants in the tournament, as well as offering a retrospective view and predictions based on the previous skating programs of a given individual.

Since the purpose of this paper is to investigate the similarities and differences between three distinct subtypes of SAT, they must be identified before mentioning any linguistic qualities that are unique to them. The subtypes are defined by the media that provides it. Radio, television, and computers are the media in dispute.

To begin, now that the conditions of SAT production and the regulations that sportscasters must follow have been outlined, it is time to identify SAT as a distinct register. However, identifying a register is a difficult undertaking due to the concept's flexibility. According to Ferguson, who employed the register variation analytical method, the variation of language structure in this scenario is based on social context, or the occasion of usage. Any variation based on dialect, formality, or simply any free variation does not distinguish SAT from other registers. He contends that in order to identify the appropriate register for a particular linguistic activity, one must first identify its unique participants, goal, and the body of knowledge and beliefs that the participants have in common," as well as its distinct form, which it is not comparable with various other registers. He then characterizes the SAT form as readily distinguished from other registers. The language output is mostly determined by the game's rhythm, an extra-linguistic activity that sets SAT apart from many other registers. This is because of how the

sport is played and the previously stated duties of sportscasters. Another key component is the amount of expressed enthusiasm, which is directly determined by the extra-linguistic activity as well as the societal conventions of what constitutes an activity. The paralinguistic components of spoken language, such as intonation, speed and pitch, are driven by anticipation and thrill, and according to Ferguson, they are the SAT's most notable characteristics [8].

The radio and television broadcast share practically all the register-identifying properties that were mentioned before. The register's objective and participants remain the same: a sportscaster informs the audience about a specific extra-linguistic action, embellishing it with color commentary. The theme of the language action remains constant as well. The participants' understanding of the game, nomenclature, and phraseology is the same regardless of the media. It is vital to underline that just this common "body of knowledge" is in issue at the time. Although the vocabulary used by sportscasters to describe extra-linguistic occurrences is largely comparable, certain syntactic or lexical distinctions remain.

When comparing radio and television commentary, the primary distinction is thus the form. The language output in both situations is reliant on the happenings on the rink, therefore the structure varies greatly, but the tactics used by a radio and television sportscaster to remark on the events differ dramatically. The reason for this is because a TV sportscaster and his audience share extralinguistic situations. Because a sportscaster's primary task is to report on ongoing events, and television viewers have visuals of those events, his most valuable role is to provide information that is not self-explanatory (names of players, jury judgments, etc.), evaluate, and provide background information [21, pp.110-116].

The Internet script should be distinguished as a subgenre within the discipline of sports reporting. The electronic report, as an indirect impression transmitted through the perception of the commentator himself, combines the features of television and radio reporting; on the other hand, both direct and indirect reporting can be considered at the same time, given that the video clip, which reproduces the course of the sports competition, could record an event that

had already occurred. Internet reporting is distinguished by its spontaneity of speech, which, as previously said, indicates the absence of prior thought of the statement, understanding, and verbalization of new material immediately in the speech process. Incomplete syntactic formulations, which are graphically expressed with an ellipsis, violations of the prescribed sequence of words, and emotional indicators are common in Internet scripts and "live" reporting (exclamations, emotive vocabulary, etc.) [26]. For example:

1. *"First set of twizzles...Are they synchronized..."* [55, 11:29-15:15].
2. *"This straight-line lift- And if you're wondering who the singer is it's Royce McClounie"* [55 11:29-15:15].

An Internet script, as a type of written sports report, is described by Politis Periklis as "a clear, chronologically consistent account of a sporting event; this narrative is chronologically accurate: its "body" is formed by the sports reporter's personal comments on the competition's course and the actions of its participants" [17, p.381]. At the same time, the Internet script varies from a typical newspaper, radio, or television story in one way: the script evolves online as a "real-time language" [10, p.35], capturing what is happening on the sports field. Another issue related with the rise of the Internet script as the newest form of sports reporting is the personality of the commentator. It should be highlighted in this respect that commenting on sporting events is, to some part, an art that necessitates dexterity in linguistic mastery. This leads to one of the major issues with the Internet script as a genre of sports commentary: the lack of the commentator's personality.

In general, the theoretical arguments given above, as well as the instances analyzed, allow the Internet script to be positioned as the newest electronic sort of sports reporting. The Internet script is a hybrid phenomenon that incorporates aspects of regular television, and radio reporting. It, in fact, employs both verbal and nonverbal communication methods. It can be said that internet-script (written sports commentary) is a fixed-on paper spontaneous speech.

1.3. Genre features of sports commentary

Each individual area of journalism has a number of specific characteristics, both in vocabulary and stylistics. This is due to two circumstances. First, each event has its own specificity, and second, information is always presented for a particular, specific social group. For example, an average citizen of the country is not at all interested in facts from the world of business analysis and vice versa. Sports fans, for whom the sports report is created, also have their own specific characteristics, which leads to the fact that the authors of the reportage must adapt the information for this category.

Therefore, based on the principles of distinguishing between terminological and non-terminological vocabulary, we conclude that under the general name "sports vocabulary" one can mean a set of sports nominations that form a sports terminological system and a set of commonly used sports vocabulary. The use of sports terminology is a distinctive feature of a sports journalist or the competence of a commentator. It is possible to understand the language of soccer players and sports journalists only by immersing oneself in the atmosphere of sports.

Sports reporters use a large number of terms belonging to a particular sport. Very often it is difficult to understand what this or that word or expression means, it is often necessary to look at the etymology, to look at the meanings of the bases separately, to compare them and find something in between, to study borrowings from other languages [31, p.12].

Modern sports reporters reporting from the scene are highly expressive and extremely emotional. They do not simply state "dry" facts, but describe what is happening, express their assessment, provide statistics, give viewers and radio listeners (and sometimes readers) additional information about participants, coaches, matches, stadiums and do everything to engage the audience. To carry out all these tasks sports commentators use all kinds of linguistic means. A special role in reporting is the use of various stylistic techniques.

Throughout recent decades, the field of linguistics show that there has been a clear trend to move away from treating the meaning of a single word, which is

usually described in terms of logical semantics. More and more often researchers turn to understanding that "a word functions not in itself, but as a means of exit to personally experienced individual picture of the world in all richness of its essences, qualities, connections and relations, emotional and evaluative nuances" [33, p.36]. Therefore, the representativeness and expressiveness of the narrative are often among the main criteria guiding the modern recipient when choosing the broadcast of a sporting event.

Most often in the speech of sports reporters can be identified such stylistic techniques as metaphor, trite epithet, metonymy, synecdoche, comparison, personification, hyperbole, litotes, periphrasis and irony; and, of course, wide usage of idiomatic expressions and fixed collocations. Among sports reports researchers distinguish those in which the event-driven beginning dominates, and reports in which analytical elements prevail [38, pp.57-58].

3. "A little costume change, something unique...something **out of the box**, oftentimes they have very unique musical choices..." – [55 2:13:20-2:16:40 short pairs].
4. "You have to kind of have a **tongue-in-cheek** approach..." - [55 2:13:20-2:16:40].
5. "They had **high hopes** whether it was this portion of the competition..." – [55 2:19:57-2:23:33].

In event-based sports reporting, the subject of description is most often events that are clearly reflected in the text as a result of the author's direct observation. To show an event in its dynamics, commentators refer to vivid and emotionally intense moments of what happened. In doing so, they not only clearly describe what they saw, but also trace poignant twists and collisions. The creation of the "presence effect" is especially important for sports reporting. The audience should be able to see the event through the commentator's eyes, empathize with them as the dramatic development of this or that situation, and visually represent the time and place of the reportage action.

The "visual effect" in sports reporting is achieved through the use of vivid details and details. Problem sports reporting is focused not only on the description of a single moment event, but also on finding out the reasons for its occurrence and development. Problem reports present informational elements (facts, figures, evidence), analytical (evaluation, comments, forecasts) and sketchy (description of the scene, characterization of its participants) [24].

We can see the presence effect being achieved in every figure skating broadcast. Take for example the Olympic Games of 2022, when the city of Beijing was elected to be the host. Throughout the short dance, pair skating, ladies' and men's singles we are taken via the means of two reporters respectively. As the footage goes on, we see the live reactions of commentators on how the score changes, how certain elements of the performance are being under review, and we can also take a decent look at previous achievements and background of the participants.

1.4 Figure skating commentary in comparison with other sports commentary

The development of figure skating broadcast has been significantly influenced by the invention of the technique of foreseeing moves before they occur rather than making comments after they do. The commentators accomplished this by locating the skaters' coaches and learning their movements in order. However, fairly enough the practice of commenting on jumps, spins and otherwise important moves right in time of their execution or after is also a very much spread technique across commentators [46].

Furthermore, highly dependent on register of the vocabulary, figure skating commentaries can become vastly different from the ones such as football, soccer, hockey or types of sports that are otherwise more prone to frivolities during reporting. Biber and Conrad provided the most comprehensive insights into register theory. According to their definition, a register is "a variety associated with a specific situation of use (including specific communicative purposes" [1, p.6]. Typical register examples include written and oral occupational varieties, as well as languages for specific purposes. The two authors' proposed framework for register investigation which is more important. The belief that linguistic features are driven by functional considerations is at the core of this methodology. The three stages of a register analysis are as follows: "(1) trying to describe the situational characteristics of the register; (2) trying to analyze the typical linguistic features of the register; and (3) identifying the functional forces that contribute to explaining why those linguistic features tend to be connected to those situational characteristics" [1, p.47].

If we are to analyze figure skating commentary in comparison with other sports commentary, we can address the set of seven register determinants established by [1, p.40-47] to delve into the details of figure skating commentary situational factors.

A. Participants – here the commentary is being produced by a sports reporter, typically sitting in front of some sort of screen and attentively following

the figure skating program. The commentary can usually be enriched by the second commentator providing additional information about the skater, scores or otherwise important points. This type of involvement is common when there isn't much interesting ongoing action on the ice. Thus far, the register remains strictly professional. In turn, by major observation we are able to notice that sports such as cybersports, in particular, their commentary is oftentimes pushing the limits of objective and subjective. As of now, most gaming stages banned swearing during sports commentaries. However, one can observe an instance of swearing in the NHL Playoff TOR vs. BOS of 2018 [56]:

6. *“F**k me!... But it gives the...gives the Bruins a chance...”* [56].

B. Relations among participants – sports commentary has always showed a limited degree of interaction with the audience. The feedback gained from sports commentary usually happens to be instant messaging on various streaming services, if not the complete lack of it. Online sports commentary has that kind of a drawback, however, typically the one reporting is sitting not far from the field, rink or other gaming set up. What is more, on site or not, a commentator often observes footages from cameras that encompass both the game and the audience, thus allowing to make comments on the audience's reaction establishing a kind of rapport.

C. Channel – produced in an oral mode, figure skating commentaries do not provide a particular difference from an internet script, for example. One can argue written commentaries may tend to have more data concerning the performer's background and various other details that do not fit in the oral commentary timewise. Most other sports commentaries share the same characteristics about the type of channel they are produced through.

D. Production circumstances – reporters tend to work under pressure due to the fact that oral commentaries are, in fact, made in real time with little to no time to edit one's vocabulary. Of that, however, one cannot be sure talking about written sports commentaries, as there is still time to type out the text upon witnessing events of the game or performance.

E. Setting – typically, the commentator (addressor) and the audience (addressees) are not situated in the same places. The only common thing they definitely have is the time, as both parties witness events at the same time. It is also important to note that internet scripts can be read out a certain time after the event happens.

F. Communicative purposes – speaking in terms of the general purposes that are pursued by the commentary itself, we can say that it is created to provide real-time coverage for a vast audience considering the majority of the audience are not experts in the field.

G. Topic – the particular domain in question is figure skating commentary which focuses on supplying the reader or speculator with the basic knowledge about an event, perhaps suggesting broader topics in order for the audience to get a general understanding [1, pp.40-47].

Therefore, we can draw the conclusion that commentaries on figure skating can differ significantly from those on sports like football, soccer, or hockey, or from other sports that are generally more prone to frivolity in reporting, depending greatly on the register of the vocabulary. At that time, cybersports were rife with profanity and other degrading techniques used to sway spectators. To reduce the use of explicit vocabulary to a minimum, nearly all streaming platforms for these commentaries have now implemented bans or other changes to their policies. Accidents do happen from time to time, as demonstrated by the NHL commentary. The strict wording and precise details that are pertinent at the time continue to be the main differences between the commentary for figure skating.

Conclusion to Chapter 1

The development of radio and television and how they were incorporated into people's daily lives had the biggest impact on sports commentary. As a result, all sporting events were scheduled to be broadcast, and commentary was soon added. It is sometimes necessary for the commentator to provide additional information in order to refine and understand the text. Otherwise, the need for a vivid description in a spoken language can be so great that it limits the amount of time that explanations and opinions get.

In terms of typology, sport announcer's talk (SAT) can be divided into two major categories: play-by-play reporting (PP) and color commentary (CC). Thus, it represents the main commentator's speech that primarily consists of summarizing the events on screen, while the second approach offers a more thorough examination of the current topic's background, including information on the game's commentary, scores, and other relevant factors.

The various radio, television, and internet commentary (script) is another aspect of typology that is worth mentioning. The form is therefore the main distinction between commentary on radio and television. The language production in both scenarios depends on what is happening on the ice; as a result, the structures and strategies used by a radio or television sportscaster to comment on the events vary greatly. It is important to distinguish the Internet script as a subgenre of sports reporting. The features of radio and television reporting are combined in the electronic report, which is an indirect impression conveyed through the commentator's perception of the action. On the other hand, direct and indirect reporting can be taken into account simultaneously because the video clip, which replicates the flow of the sporting event, may capture an event that has already happened.

In the theoretical section of the paper, we also established that contemporary sports reporters covering the figure skating event are expressive and highly emotional. Instead of just stating the facts, they describe what is happening, offer their opinion, give statistics, provide readers with additional information about

players, coaches, games, and stadiums, and do everything in their power to pique the interest of the audience. Sports commentators employ a wide range of linguistic techniques to carry out all these tasks. The application of different stylistic techniques plays a great role in reporting.

Thus, it follows that reports on figure skating can differ significantly from those related to sports like football or hockey, or from other sports that are typically more prone to banalities and irrelevant speech in reporting, depending greatly on the register of the vocabulary. The use of expletives and other demeaning tactics to influence spectators was common in cybersports at its early stages. Nearly all streaming services for these commentaries have now enacted bans or other changes to their policies in an effort to minimize the use of explicit language. The main distinctions in the analysis of figure skating reports proceed to be the rigid wording and exact details that are relevant at the time.

2. Figure skating broadcast and its specific features

2.1. Stylistics and syntax of figure skating commentary

Literary and linguistic research frequently includes stylistic analysis. Stylistic analysis in linguistics is concerned with identifying verbal and written language usage trends. Its primary goal is to evaluate a text's distinctiveness, which refers to the distinctive qualities of the language that a literary work uses to deliver its meaning. This usually requires contrasting the language of a given text with those found in common forms of communication [18; 20].

Consequently, to try and outline stylistics and syntactic features of figure skating commentary, we will first review Ferguson's work [9] to make sure the new variables we discovered in our data sample are still there and are being used for communication in the same ways as Ferguson and Reaser have indicated. We will use Ferguson's method of starting with basic phrases and progressively utilizing more complicated modifiers to convey our findings. We will not go over every variable; instead, we will concentrate on three that stood out in our corpus. The first factor relates to the usage of diminutive words to soften criticism. We also discovered a large number of deictic adverbs, which serve as signposts. Finally, we will look at discourse deixis, which solidifies claims and denotes cooperation.

Simplification

Copulas and sentence-initial subjects are frequently dropped in various registers, including SAT, as noted by Ferguson and Reaser [9; 19]. The overarching goal of usage is generally evident when it comes to headlines, note-taking, or captioning. Short headlines and captions are preferred. While the writer may otherwise just use whole sentences, notes should also be made more concisely. So, the original purpose appears to be related to economy, even though it is true that headlines should also be attention-grabbing. What then is the real reason for SAT simplification? Consider the corpus's initial samples:

7. “[She] tried the triple [axel]. Probably maybe not all the way around either.” [54 12:30-15:30].
8. “[She’s] going for a looping point with a triple lutz..and...[she’s] making a double toe [loop]” [54 12:30-15:30].
9. “Again footwork and [she] transitions to double axel” [54 18:55-21:57].
10. “[She’s] finishing off to the music” [54 18:55-21:57].

(7), (8), and (9), which both come from live action reporting, exhibit numerous examples of simplification. There are two instances of simultaneous pronoun and copula deletion in (8 and 10). All of the instances show a simple deletion of the subject, although this might also mean that a conjunction was missed. Other particles, like articles or prepositions, can also be seen to have been removed. In figure skating, it has been customary to delete leaps' entire, proper titles as shown in (7 and 8).

Our corpus revealed a higher frequency for deletions during live action announcing, contrary to Reaser's [19] assertion that both subject and copula deletion are uniformly dispersed along color commentary and play-by-play reporting for his TV broadcast analysis. This discovery casts doubt on Ferguson's claim that the feature had been appropriated for its stylistic value since it makes the discourse engaging and informal. It appears that the use of simplification has a communicative purpose.

Given that the play-by-play component contained the bulk of tokens, Reaser's [19] explanation that the variable was caused by the demand for shorter utterances appears to be accurate. Although color comments typically take the stage during a series of many replays, it is clear that they even have more time to prepare their contributions in a fast-paced and rarely halted sports. Contrarily, live action is impulsive and quick-moving, necessitating a greater requirement for word economy. Consider the following additional examples:

11. “Maybe it’s a quarter off, [but] it’s landed” [54 25:15-28:25].
12. “[It’s] good to see a foot sequence that starts from the center of the rink” [54 25:15-28:25].

13. *“Layback, to the combination spin, [and] camel, [and] sit”* [54 31:50-36:15].

Further deleted particles can frequently be found in addition to the simplifications that Ferguson and Reaser found [9; 19] as evidenced by the conjunctions in (11 and 13). Patterns of recursivity are visible in sentences (7-10) and (12) because, despite references to the same agent, the subject is not repeated or substituted with a pronoun. Because the observer has visual access to the situation, simplification extends beyond sentence-initial subjects and copulas to include other elements such as conjunctions, articles, and prepositions.

It follows that simplicity is probably still a very useful aspect of broadcast figure skating SAT. It's not just a means to appear more thrilling or casual, though it's still plausible that other slow-moving sports have adopted it for these reasons. Instead, it speeds up spontaneous reporting by removing information that isn't important for understanding. Utterances become more comprehensive and fragments are less common when there is more time available, like in recaps, as can be observed in (8):

14. *“She’s taking off, and we are watching. She’s almost half a rotation off. That is what was awarded by the technical panel.”* [54 31:50-36:15].

Due to time limits, the message is subsequently clarified by highlighting the pressure the announcers have when covering live action. It doesn't make the work any simpler to know that they are being broadcast on a huge scale and that their audience wants only the most pertinent and precise opinions. Yet, as DeNu [6] pointed out, the facilitating practice is a result of American announcers' adoption of the extremely specific action descriptions found in the SAT of other American sports. The underlying face threat is therefore self-inflicted. When quick pass combinations are displayed on the field, British and German commentators typically only call the players by name, whereas American broadcasters typically show the combinations in greater detail.

Naturally, the sample utterance (14) requires a lot more time to construct. While DeNu [6] dislikes this kind of attention to detail, it may be necessary to

draw in new viewers who are accustomed to other sports' announcing styles. In either case, American broadcasters' face-threatening immediacy of reporting is especially high due to their tremendous inclination for detail. In order to determine whether simplification is also a key component in British Televised figure skating SAT, comparison research with that discipline is required. It would be more proof that the variable is functional if there were fewer deletions and a lower level of detail.

Subject-Dependent Inversion

Inversions are simple to overestimate, as Reaser has already stated [19]. Contrary to the majority of the factors he and Ferguson took into account, it appears more frequently in written than in spoken English. This is heavily noted since it seems paradoxical in a register that encourages simple expressions. The inversion of subject and dependent so stands out, yet it may not be as common as first thought. This view is supported by our data because there aren't many examples of inverted sentence construction in the corpus. Here are tokens we discovered:

15. *“Again, trying the triple axel, a little bit of the rotation, [is] Kawabe Mana”* [54 31:50-36:15].
16. *“Representing Australia, as a six-time champion, [is] Kailani Craine”* [54 1:02:17-1:05:40].
17. *“Representing the host nation is a nineteen-year-old Californian, Zhu Yi”* [54 1:35:06-1:38:18].
18. *“From the south-east of Czech Republic, in Brno, twenty-five-year-old, [is] Eliska Brezinova”* [54 1:49:20-1:53:10].
19. *“From Bulgaria, Alexandra Feigin, [is] performing to music by...”* [54 2:02:30-2:06:20].
20. *“Twenty-year-old, born in Connecticut, now [is] representing Switzerland, Alexia Paganini”* [54 2:22:00-2:25:35].
21. *“To a competitor who has delivered some exceptional short programs this year, [is] Loena Hendricks, from Belgium...”* [54 3:07:40-3:11:11].

22. *“Goes comfortably into the gold medal position and guarantees himself at least a silver medal, Kagiya Yuma of Japan, an 18-year-old”* [50 3:34:41-3:42:21].
23. *“Entertains, but does not do so frivolously, Jason Brown”* [50 3:01:55-3:07:10].
24. *“[He] Comes into this as the fifth-best performer in the show, having set the personal best en route, Morisi Kvitelashvili of Georgia”* [50 3:10:15-3:15:01].
25. *“What a marvelous first short program, Cha Junhwan of Korean Republic, personal best”* [50 3:18:16-3:23:25].
26. *“From Australia, [is] Brendan Kerry...”*[50 1:15:15-1:20:10].

The speaker in sentence 15 seems to have initially considered leaving out the subject, but eventually decided to include it for clarity. While there may not have been any conscious planning involved, the decision to include the subject was likely made subconsciously. It's possible that this delayed mention of the agent was actually intentional. In sentences (16) and (17), there are two instances of subject-dependent inversion. Based on the collected evidence, it could be questioned whether this type of inversion is commonly used in SAT, since there is typically only one skater involved.

Looking at it from a pragmatic perspective rather than a syntactic one, the feature in question can be seen as topicalization. When the verb's argument is moved to the front, as seen in examples (16) and (17) with "a six-time champion," "a nineteen-year-old," and "from the Netherlands," it becomes the main topic of the sentence. This gives it more emphasis than it would have in its usual position. This helps the listener quickly determine the direction or starting point of the performance before any other details are given. Although this is an advantage for the announcer, it also benefits the listener by making it easier to follow the general context.

At the same time, to speak of Pairs programs in figure skating, one should say that no such subject inversions occur. The sports announcers keep referring to

skaters as them/their/they and so on. Consider following examples from Pairs Short Program in the city of Beijing:

27. *“They’re going for a little fall which is the highest...”* [52 11:55-15:25].
28. *“And back up to catch Alexa over his head”* – [52 18:38-22:30].
29. *“They are skating to the Sun that is rising...”* [52 18:38-22:30].
30. *“Very different entries...and now they’re together”* [52 25:20-29:00].
31. *“Technically they are both very good straiders...”* [52 25:20-29:00].
32. *“It’s a throw, triple lutz, they’ll have good points”* [52 42:40-46:30].
33. *“This is when you see their pair skills...and skating skills.... They are so smooth in their skating skills, so technically precise.”* [52 42:40-46:30].
34. *“A third time they’ve competed at the Olympic Games. Huge congratulations to them.”* [52 49:30-54:15].
35. *“A step out for Miriam...His triple toe [toe] was fine, she was... stepping outside.”* [52 49:30-54:15].
36. *“They have an easy flow across the ice up to their hand-to-hand entrance to the lift, pushing to the press lift, star position or the hip lift.”* [52 55:55-59:30].
37. *“I think they rather enjoyed the experience.”* [52 55:55-59:30].
38. *“Skating together for only 3 months and they qualified last September”* [52 1:16:50-1:20:40].
39. *“When you consider how little experience they have...that was a remarkable display!”* [52 1:16:50-1:20:40].

The limited number of inversions found in our corpus seem to be mainly used for stylistic purposes and not functional ones. It's possible that the style of SAT has become more consistent, with a greater use of passive constructions for a more informal tone. However, examples (16) and (17) demonstrate that there is still a benefit to viewers in using inversions to highlight key information and convey spatial relations quickly. In terms of avoiding social embarrassment, using inversions to correctly identify players is important, as fans tend to notice mistakes. It's likely that the unnecessarily complex non-canonical word order has

been replaced by simpler constructions like the passive voice, which create a slight delay but maintain a more casual tone without using intricate sentence patterns.

Heavy Modifiers

SAT is characterized by its formal style, with heavy modifiers being a prominent feature. Ferguson suggests that the use of such modifiers is uncommon in spoken English, and even native speakers may have difficulty incorporating them smoothly. However, announcers, as experienced public speakers, are able to use heavy modifiers with ease for describing incidental details. It's important to note the context of these samples, though:

40. *“From the Netherlands, [is] Lindsey van Zundert, [she] turned seventeen a day before getting on the plane and heading out to Beijing”* [54 38:30-41:40].
41. *“Representing Great Britain, [is the] five-times national champion, Natasha McKay”* [54 1:09:00-1:12:35].
42. *“A young athlete from Georgia, [she is] performing to Une Vie D’Amour, Anastasia Gubanova”* [54 1:15:40-1:18:40].
43. *“From the United States, [she is] performing to music by Yiruma, Mariah Bell”* [54 1:22:11-1:25:25].
44. *“Sometimes the career of two veterans can be invigorated by a new partnership, positively shining people since they started working together, Vanessa James and Eric Radford”* [52 25:20-29:00].
45. *“Only made the international debut this season of the Lombardia Trophy..., then they won a qualification..., they were actually top in the Free Skating on silver (...) they have proven to be a very popular partnership, haven’t they (...), Laura Barquero and Marco Zandron”* [52 55:55-59:30].
46. *“From Canada, [is] Madeline Schizas, [is] performing to music from Madame Butterfly by Giacomo Puccini...”* [53 50:30-55:30].
47. *“The final performer in this first of four groups, [is] Switzerland’s Alexia Paganini, [she is] performing to Scheherazade by Rimski-Korsakov.”* [53 58:10-1:03:00].

48. “*The promising Olga Mikutina from Austria to begin...*” [53 1:13:25-1:18:15].
49. “*Seventeen-year-old athlete from Nagoya, [is] Kawabe Mana*” [53 1:37:02-1:41:44].
50. “*To an athlete who skated a season’s best in the short program, Nicole Shott*” [53 1:44:40-:1:50:00].
51. “*The final competitor in this group, representing the United States of America, [is] Karen Chen*” [53 1:52:17-1:57:00].

The first four instances of apposition are brief and straightforward. They just need the definite article, the position, and the nationality of the players being designated, respectively. They are quickly inserted after the name and don't actually take up much time or get in the way of the live action presentation.

The aside that was taken in (29) is more intricate and includes the history of both players. The first four instances were from a quick introduction that came before the performance, whereas examples (29) and (30) were spoken during a break where different paired performances and background information were highlighted. The announcer felt free to provide a little bit more background information than usual because there was no time pressure at all to finish his action report.

The use of heavy modifiers in Sports Announcing Talk (SAT) is influenced by the time constraints that the announcer faces. When there are short interruptions or the announcer decides to ignore the live action, there is ample time to use complex relative clauses or more extensive noun phrases (NPs) to describe the action. However, when time is limited, the announcer must rely on brief adjectival constructions or NPs that can be easily incorporated into the description.

The timing of heavy modifiers in SAT also depends on the overall timing of the skating routine. In our corpus, we observed that incidental background deliveries occur more frequently in the earlier stages of a broadcast, when some viewers may be less familiar with the pairs and skaters. By providing effective coloring of the live action, the announcers offer casual followers enough

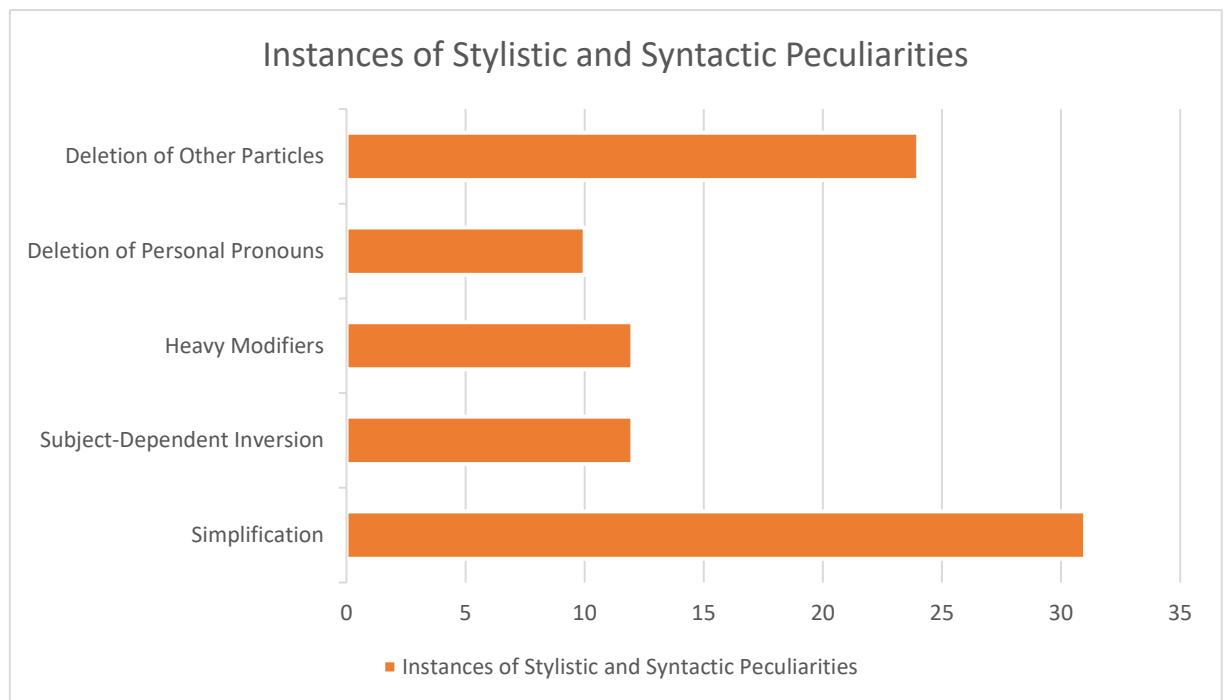
information to keep them interested and engaged. This approach highlights the relationships and connections within the world of figure skating that go beyond the figure skating itself and transforms the broadcast into a learning experience that helps to close gaps in knowledge.

In short, the use of heavy modifiers in SAT serves a crucial communicative function that helps to familiarize the audience with the skaters and their sides. By providing detailed descriptions of the action, the announcers enable viewers to pick a side and stay tuned, even if they are not initially familiar with the skaters in question. Ultimately, this approach helps to enhance the overall viewing experience and provides a valuable service to fans who want to learn more about the sport.

In addition to the occasional use of heavy modifiers, there are other factors at play in this method of delivering information to viewers. As Reaser pointed out [19], the amount of background information given by announcers on TV is actually quite limited when compared to the opportunities they have to provide it. Therefore, when announcers do take the time to use heavier modifiers, such as nonrestrictive relative clauses and complex appositional noun phrases, it often signals the beginning of a longer excursion away from the live action. In this sense, it can be argued that the use of heavy modifiers is not merely incidental, but rather a deliberate choice by announcers to provide viewers with additional context and knowledge about the sport or event being broadcast.

By using these more complex grammatical constructions, announcers are able to provide a deeper level of analysis and explanation that goes beyond what can be gleaned from simply watching the live action. This is particularly important in sports like figure skating, where the technical elements can be difficult for casual viewers to understand. By providing additional information and context, announcers are able to make the broadcast a more engaging and educational experience for viewers. Therefore, while heavy modifiers may be used relatively infrequently, their use is an important part of the announcer's toolkit for providing valuable information to viewers.

The research on the stylistics and syntax of figure skating commentary reveals that simplification in broadcast figure skating SAT is a useful aspect for conveying information quickly and concisely. The study found that the simplification of copulas and sentence-initial subjects was frequent, particularly during live action announcing, where word economy is crucial. Deletions of particles such as articles, conjunctions, and prepositions were also observed. Our research suggests that simplification is not solely used to create a casual and engaging discourse but has a communicative purpose. The deletion of less important information helps the audience to comprehend the essential aspects of the performance better. Consider the following diagram for better understanding of the analyzed material of the first section of the second chapter:



Although there are doubts regarding Ferguson's claim [9] that the use of simplification is purely for stylistic purposes, the research confirms that it is an essential feature of figure skating SAT, and its underlying purpose is to convey information efficiently. The study found that the feature was more frequent during live action announcing, indicating its necessity in spontaneous reporting. The research contributes to a better understanding of the stylistic and syntactic features of figure skating commentary, which can help improve the quality of sports

commentary and the audience's experience. The findings can be useful for broadcasters, commentators, and other sports analysts to better communicate with the audience effectively. The study's approach, using Ferguson's method of progressively utilizing more complicated modifiers to convey the findings, can be applied to other areas of research to analyze discourse in various contexts.

2.2. Figure skating specific lexical features

Figure skating is an exceptional sport that is often referred to as a combination of athletics, aesthetics, and technical precision. The unique nature of figure skating requires the commentators to use specific lexical features that can accurately convey the skater's performance to the viewers. The language used by the commentators is a crucial component of the audience's understanding and appreciation of the skater's performance. The use of specific lexical features, such as technical terms, evaluative adjectives, and descriptive adverbs, plays a significant role in enhancing the viewer's comprehension and appreciation of the skater's skills and abilities [13].

Moreover, the language used by commentators during figure skating events is critical to creating a connection between the audience and the skater. The audience is not only interested in watching the skater's performance but also in learning about the technical aspects of the sport. The use of technical jargon by the commentators helps to create a sense of credibility and authority, thus establishing trust and reliability in the commentator's analysis. Additionally, the evaluative adjectives used by the commentators provide the audience with an overall impression of the skater's performance, while descriptive adverbs help to create a visual image of the skater's movements [13].

Technical Terms

Technical terms play a crucial role in the language used by commentators during figure skating events, and they are a significant component of figure skating specific lexical features. Technical terms are used to describe specific elements of the skater's performance and are essential to conveying the complexity and difficulty of the sport to the audience.

At the Beijing 2022 Olympic Games, commentators used technical terms to describe the various elements of a skater's performance. Technical terms such as "triple axel," "quad toe loop," and "death spiral" are used to describe specific jumps and moves that are unique to figure skating. These terms are not commonly used in everyday language and are specific to the sport. The use of technical terms

by the commentators helps to create a sense of credibility and expertise, and establishes trust and reliability in their analysis. Look at the following examples:

52. *“Twist-turn and the first of two jump passes to come...Salchow, both landed”* [52 12:21-16:40].
53. *“Double axel, she turns around, double toe...”* [52 12:21-16:40].
54. *“Both had troubles, only doubles.”* [52 20:20-24:50].
55. *“One does a single, a triple doesn’t get counted.”* [52 20:20-24:50].
56. *“A split triple twist, good flow, not high...”* [52 28:14-32:45].
57. *“Triple toe, double toe, scored as triple toe missed...”* [52 28:14-32:45].
58. *“A throw loop, little over-rotated...”* [51 1:08:54-1:13:30].
59. *“But they will need the next jump triple and landed; excellent lift...”* [51 1:08:54-1:13:30].
60. *“Early preparation for throw triple lutz”* [51 1:16:38-1:21:45].
61. *“A difficult lift on the same side of the rink...it’s a loop entry”* [51 1:16:38-1:21:45].
62. *“Flying down the rink to the split, triple, twist”* [51 1:36:05-1:40:48].

Furthermore, technical terms serve to differentiate between the various elements of the skater's performance. Figure skating is a sport that requires a high degree of technical precision, and each element of the performance is carefully choreographed and executed. The use of technical terms helps to highlight the specific elements of the skater's performance, which allows the audience to appreciate the skill and athleticism required to execute these moves successfully.

Additionally, technical terms also provide a level of consistency in the language used by commentators. By using a standardized set of technical terms, commentators can communicate effectively with the audience and provide an accurate description of the skater's performance. This consistency is particularly important during major events such as the Olympic Games, where commentators from different countries and language backgrounds need to communicate in a clear and concise manner.

Evaluative Adjectives

During figure skating events, evaluative adjectives are a crucial component of the language used by commentators and a significant aspect of figure skating specific lexical features. Their main purpose is to describe the skater's performance and provide an assessment of the quality and effectiveness of their execution. Evaluative adjectives help to enhance the audience's understanding and appreciation of the sport, and they are particularly important during major events such as the Pyeongchang 2018 and Beijing 2022 Olympics.

One of the primary reasons why evaluative adjectives are vital in figure skating specific lexical features is because they convey the emotion and artistry of the skater's performance. Figure skating is not just about athleticism and technical precision, but also about the beauty and grace of the performance. Evaluative adjectives such as "graceful," "elegant," and "powerful" are used to describe the emotional and artistic aspects of the skater's performance, which enhances the audience's understanding and appreciation of the sport. During our research, we have found such examples to solidify the given facts:

63. *"Did it very well..., choreographically smart finish..., a great skate."* [51 36:45-41:15].
64. *"Their connection with the music is mature and impressive"* [51 36:45-41:15].
65. *"Very light...; Rough landing, strong control to finish"* [51 52:09-56:52].
66. *"Physically a good match with great lines-, oh that is smooth, no effort"* [51 1:01:00-1:05:45].
67. *"His footwork is really advanced; well done, very quick to position and confident"* [51 1:01:00-1:05:45].
68. *"Excellent drift; quality spin skating skills"* [51 1:08:50-1:13:40].
69. *"...Triple lutz- how smooth is that..."* [51 1:16:38-1:21:45].
70. *"At the heart of it all the velvety smooth triple lu- throw for the triple salchow..."* [51 1:16:38-1:21:45].
71. *"What a great catch and a soft put-down"* [51 1:36:05-1:40:48].

72. “*Beautiful position, right, Riku*” [51 1:36:05-1:40:48].

73. “*Combination spin - smooth from the one side to the other*” [51 1:44:35-1:49:00].

74. “*Great involvement...Beautiful spin and a gorgeous overhead lift*” [51 1:52:14-1:57:00].

75. “*Again...magic landing; fabulous and happy*” [51 1:52:14-1:57:00].

In fact, evaluative adjectives differentiate between the various skaters and their performances. While figure skating requires a high degree of technical precision, the quality of execution can vary greatly among skaters. Evaluative adjectives such as "smooth," "excellent," and "very light" are used to describe the quality of execution of the skater's performance. By using these adjectives, commentators can highlight the differences in the skaters' abilities and execution, which allows the audience to appreciate the skill and athleticism required to execute these moves successfully.

Evaluative adjectives also add excitement and drama to the performance. Figure skating is a sport that is both technical and artistic, and the use of evaluative adjectives helps to create a sense of tension and excitement for the audience. Commentators at the Pyeongchang 2018 and Beijing 2022 Olympics used evaluative adjectives such as "exceptional," "confident," and "rough" to describe the skater's performance and to create a sense of tension and anticipation for the audience.

In conclusion, evaluative adjectives are a crucial part of the vocabulary used in figure skating, especially during important competitions like the Olympics in Beijing in 2022 and Pyeongchang in 2018. They assist in expressing the artistry and emotion of the skater's performance, establishing a clear distinction between skaters and their performances, and generating tension and drama for the spectator. Commentators can improve the audience's knowledge and awareness of the sport and foster tension and enthusiasm during important events by employing evaluative adjectives.

2.3. Gendered broadcast features manifested in figure skating commentary

Discussions about how gender is portrayed in media have long taken place among academics and researchers. The ways in which gender is built and perpetuated in sports commentary has attracted increasing attention in recent years. Being a sport frequently associated with femininity, figure skating serves as an excellent illustration of how gendered rhetoric can appear in broadcast features. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how gendered broadcast elements appear in figure skating commentary. This study will reveal how gender roles and stereotypes are created and maintained in the context of figure skating contests by examining the language and discourse used by commentators.

A blend of athleticism and artistry is frequently associated with the sport of figure skating. Yet, gendered language frequently takes center stage while discussing figure skating events. Male skaters are frequently commended for their strength and athleticism, while female skaters are frequently complimented for their beauty and elegance. By portraying men as strong and in charge and women as objects of admiration, this gendered language perpetuates established gender roles and stereotypes. As a result, commentators frequently focus more on female athletes' beauty and costume choices than on their technical prowess, making them the target of greater scrutiny and criticism than their male counterparts.

Irena Martínková, Taryn Knox, Lynley Anderson & Jim Parry (2022) [14] study looked at the terminology used by commentators during the figure skating competitions. According to the report, there is a lot of ambiguity and inconsistent usage of terms connected to sex and gender in sport, particularly when it comes to sport eligibility categories and sex verification processes. The writers argue that sex and gender should be clearly distinguished, and that sex should be the basis for sport rather than gender. They advise labeling the methods sex verification rather than gender verification and using the terms "male" and "female" for the two sport categories rather than "women" and "men." They contend that doing so would

prevent ambiguity and miscommunication and enable better discussions and regulations in the sport.

Messner and Cooky [15] also looked at the ways that gender is perpetuated and formed in sports media. Researchers discovered that female athletes are more likely to be objectified and sexualized than their male counterparts and are frequently represented as being less skilled and competent. This is especially true in sports like figure skating, where physical attractiveness frequently takes precedence over technical proficiency. According to Messner and Cooky, this kind of gendered language and imagery maintains the notion that women are inferior to men in athletics and feeds into ingrained gender roles and stereotypes.

Let us explore scarce examples of similar instances of gendered vocabulary in the replays of the Beijing 2022 Olympics:

76. *“He is making it through the labyrinth of qualification of the short program(.) He counts as the twenty-fourth **strongest** and he is welcome here as a 3-time national champion.”* [50 12:10-16:50].

77. *“His upper body stays **rock-solid**”* [50 1:15:15-1:20:10].

In addition to words, gender can also be expressed in the manner that commentators highlight various elements of a skater's performance. For instance, male skaters are frequently rated harsher on their footwork and aesthetic expression, while female skaters are frequently judged harsher on their spins and leaps. This kind of gendered emphasis supports the notion that males are more concerned with athletics and power than women are with beauty and grace.

The use of gendered language and focus in figure skating commentary can have a significant impact on female athletes. Research has shown that female athletes are often subjected to more criticism and scrutiny than their male counterparts, and are more likely to be judged on their appearance rather than their athletic ability. This type of scrutiny can lead to increased pressure on female athletes to conform to traditional gender roles and expectations, and can make it more difficult for them to succeed in their sport. Furthermore, the use of gendered language and focus in sports commentary can have a broader impact on the sport

as a whole, as it may consistently judge female athletes on their appearance rather than their athletic ability, further impacting individual athletes.

Over the years, there has been a shift towards less gendered language in figure skating commentary. While there may still be instances of gendered vocabulary, it is becoming increasingly harder to find examples of it in official commentaries. This shift symbolizes a growing awareness and understanding of the ways in which gendered language can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and biases. See the following examples of the material researched:

78. *“Donovan Carrillo – history maker, Donovan Carrillo – trailblazer, Donovan Carrillo like no other...The building smiles when he performs”* [50 51:50-56:50].

79. *“Such an interesting performer...Stylish and intriguing”* [50 1:23:22-1:28:00].

80. *“He’s a modernist, he’s a great dancer”* [50 1:39:00-1:43:50].

81. *“What a skater, what an entertainer...she was brilliant”* [53 19:45-24:45].

During the Beijing 2022 Olympics, there was a great number of instances of commentary that did not rely on gendered language to describe skaters. For example, commentators often used technical terms and descriptive phrases that were not gendered, such as characterizing the program, jumps, spins, etc: "triple axel" or "athleticism." This is a departure from previous years, where female skaters were often described using gendered vocabulary such as "elegant" or "graceful," while male skaters were described as "powerful" or "strong."

This change in language reflects a broader societal shift towards more gender-inclusive language. The use of gendered language is often subconscious and can be the result of ingrained cultural biases and stereotypes. For example, the idea that femininity is associated with grace and elegance, while masculinity is associated with power and strength, is a common stereotype that has historically been perpetuated through language.

Nevertheless, the use of gendered language in figure skating commentary can have negative consequences. When female skaters are consistently described

using gendered vocabulary that emphasizes their appearance or femininity, it can detract from their athletic abilities and perpetuate the idea that women are valued primarily for their looks. Similarly, describing male skaters using gendered language that emphasizes their physical strength can perpetuate harmful ideas about what it means to be a man.

By moving towards less gendered language in figure skating commentary, commentators are helping to break down these harmful stereotypes and promote more gender-inclusive attitudes. This can have a positive impact on young viewers who are watching the sport and learning about the world around them. When commentators use language that emphasizes the athletic abilities of all skaters, regardless of their gender, it sends a message that everyone can excel in the sport regardless of their gender identity.

Of course, there is still work to be done in terms of eliminating gendered language from figure skating commentary and sports commentary more broadly. However, the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find examples of gendered language in official commentaries is a positive step in the right direction. It implies that attempts are being made to build a more inclusive and equitable environment for all people, regardless of their gender identity, and that there is a greater knowledge and understanding of the influence that language may have on forming societal attitudes.

In conclusion, the issue of gendered vocabulary in the figure skating broadcast is a complex one that reflects the broader social and cultural norms that shape our understanding of gender. Figure skating is one of the few sports where men and women compete side by side, yet commentators and viewers often use different language to describe their performances [41]. This can reinforce gender stereotypes and limit the ways in which we appreciate the athleticism and artistry of all skaters, regardless of their gender. While there are some efforts to address this issue, such as the use of gender-neutral terms like "athlete" or "skater," there is still a long way to go in terms of challenging and changing the gendered language that pervades the figure skating world. This requires not only awareness and

education but also a willingness to challenge traditional gender norms and embrace more inclusive and diverse perspectives.

Ultimately, the goal should be to create a more equitable and inclusive environment for all skaters, regardless of their gender identity or expression. By recognizing the impact of gendered vocabulary in the figure skating broadcast and taking steps to address it, we can help to promote a more inclusive and positive culture in this unique and beautiful sport.

Conclusion to Chapter 2

Figure skating is a sport that is exceptional in the sense that it combines elements of athleticism, aesthetics, and technical precision. To accurately convey a skater's performance to the viewers, commentators must utilize specific lexical features that are unique to the sport. The language used by commentators is essential for the audience's understanding and appreciation of the skater's performance. This chapter examines the stylistic and syntactic features of figure skating commentary, along with its unique lexical features.

In the first section of the chapter, a brief history of figure skating commentary is presented, highlighting how it has evolved over time. Initially, commentators used simple descriptions of skaters' performances, but it has since progressed to more complex analyses of their techniques and styles. Technological advancements have also contributed to the evolution of figure skating commentary, allowing for more detailed analysis and real-time reporting.

Chapter 2 delves deeper into the specific features of figure skating commentary, examining the stylistic and syntactic elements. It emphasizes that simplification is an essential aspect of conveying information efficiently. The research confirms that simplification is not purely for stylistic purposes but rather an essential feature of figure skating SAT (Special Assessment Test). The study found that simplification was more frequent during live-action announcing, indicating its necessity in spontaneous reporting. Moreover, the chapter also emphasizes the importance of specific lexical features in enhancing viewers' comprehension and appreciation of skaters' skills and abilities. Technical terms, evaluative adjectives, and descriptive adverbs play a significant role in conveying information accurately to viewers at home.

The last section of this chapter focuses on the role of gender in figure skating commentary. It highlights how gender biases can influence commentators' language choices when describing male versus female skaters' performances. Female commentators are also subjected to sexist comments from their male

counterparts. The section emphasizes the need for more awareness of gender biases in figure skating commentary.

As a whole, this chapter presents insightful information about the language used by commentators during figure skating tournaments and how it affects the viewer's enjoyment. We learn more about how commentators enlighten viewers at home by examining the stylistic and syntactic components of figure skating commentary as well as its distinctive lexical qualities. The chapter also emphasizes the significance of avoiding the perpetuation of damaging preconceptions or biases and being aware of gender biases in commenting.

Conclusion

For many years, sports commentary language has been an intriguing subject for researchers and linguists alike. In particular, the way the English language is used in figure skating broadcasts has been analyzed to understand its special features and how it contributes to the overall broadcasting experience. Throughout our research, we provide a comprehensive analysis of English in figure skating broadcast, examining its history, typology, genre characteristics, and means of expression.

Chapter 1 of the thesis offers an introduction to sports commentary as a linguistic phenomenon. It allows us to trace the roots of sports commentary back to ancient Greece and Rome, where it was used to describe athletic events. In the first chapter of this paper, we reviewed the concept of sports commentary and its different types, including live commentary, post-match analysis, and expert analysis. Additionally, we discussed the genre features of sports commentary, such as its structure, style, and tone. One of the most interesting topics explored in this chapter is the comparison between figure skating commentary and other types of sports commentaries.

In chapter 2, we delve into the specific characteristics of figure skating broadcast and what sets it apart from other forms of sports broadcast. We discover that while some similarities exist, there are also distinct differences that make figure skating broadcast unique. Specifically, figure skating requires a greater emphasis on visual description due to the complex and intricate nature of each performance. In addition to discussing the visual elements of figure skating broadcast, we also explore the stylistic and syntactic features of commentary in this sport. The thesis showed that metaphors and similes are commonly used to describe a skater's performance, along with technical jargon to identify and describe the specific elements of each routine. The use of adjectives and adverbs is also significant in creating a sense of drama and conveying emotion to the audience. Through this analysis, we gained a deeper understanding of how language is used in figure skating commentary to convey both the technical and

artistic aspects of each performance. The use of metaphors, technical jargon, and emotional language contribute to the overall broadcast experience, enhancing the audience's appreciation of the skater's skills and abilities.

One of the key takeaways from our analysis is that figure skating commentary is unique compared to other forms of sports commentary. We found that it requires a delicate balance between technical descriptions and emotional expression. Unlike other forms of sports commentary that primarily focus on describing the action on the field or court, figure skating commentary must also convey the artistry and emotion behind each performance. To achieve this, commentators must utilize a variety of language means such as metaphors, similes, adjectives, particular instruments such as subject-dependent inversion or heavy modifiers, and adverbs to create a sense of drama and excitement for viewers.

In addition, we found that deixis plays an important role in figure skating commentary. By referring to specific elements of the performance, such as jumps or spins, commentators help viewers engage with the performance and appreciate the technical precision required for each element. The use of repetition, rhetorical questions, hyperbole, and deixis all contribute to creating a sense of tension and excitement during each performance.

Furthermore, we believe that the thesis highlights the significance of stylistics and syntax in figure skating commentary. Through this analysis, we have gained a greater appreciation for the artistry and athleticism required for each performance and how language is used to create a unique and engaging broadcast experience for viewers.

In conclusion, the analysis offers insightful information about the function of language in sports commentary, notably in the broadcast of figure skating. We can better appreciate the creativity and athleticism required for each performance if we comprehend how language is utilized to arouse spectators' interest and create drama. Each performance's suspense and excitement are heightened by the use of language devices including deixis, repetition, rhetorical questions, and hyperbole.

In the end, this study helps us comprehend the complexity of sports commentary and how important language is to the broadcasting process.

Abstract

Millions of people throughout the world participate in the popular sport of figure skating, and its broadcast as well as commentary has a big impact on the competitors, the audience, and the sport itself. This study will look at the broadcasting of figure skating today and discuss how it affects many facets of the sport and the commentary itself. This thesis, which is broken up into two chapters that each offers a unique viewpoint on the linguistic phenomenon of sports commentary (specifically the figure skating broadcast), analyzes the interesting realm of sports commentary in figure skating. Sports commentary is introduced as a linguistic phenomenon in the first chapter, which also covers its history, varieties, and genre characteristics like structure, style, and tone. The second part focuses exclusively on figure skating broadcast, exploring the linguistic quirks employed by commentators to enhance the viewing experience and examines various elements such as gendered terminology, syntax, and stylistics as well as lexical traits. We use data from the replays of figure skating programs of the Olympic Games 2018 and 2022 to decompose the structure, particularities of the commentary vocabulary, the increase of simplification, and a tendency to equal coverage of male and female figure skating programs. In order to make the content understandable to academic audiences as well as public readers interested in sports broadcasting, clear language is used throughout the entirety of the paper. The thesis offers some insight into the language peculiarities of figure skating sports commentary, revealing details about particular subjects within the field such as gendered vocabulary. In and of itself, our findings make a significant contribution to the general knowledge of sports commentary in figure skating and reveal the technicality and the desirable simplicity that lies within the figure skating commentary. It gives a thorough examination of this linguistic phenomenon and focuses on the characteristics that set it apart from other sports commentary styles.

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Instances of evaluative adjectives used by commentators

Evaluative Adjectives	
1. Choreographically smart	21. Over-rotated
2. Great	22. Young
3. Mature	23. Invigorated
4. Impressive	24. Positively shining
5. Very light	25. Promising
6. Rough	26. Exceptional
7. Strong	27. Marvelous
8. Physically good	28. Unique
9. Smooth	29. Out of the box
10. Really advanced	30. Tongue-in-cheek
11. Very quick	31. Synchronized
12. Confident	32. Gorgeous
13. Excellent	33. Velvety smooth
14. Quality	34. Rock-solid
15. Soft	35. Strongest
16. Beautiful	36. Brilliant
17. Magic	37. Like no other
18. Fabulous	38. Stylish
19. Happy	39. Intriguing
20. Good	40. Impressive

Glossary

Axel	1/2 Turn Jump performed from a LOF take-off, counterclockwise rotation, to a ROB landing (no toe-stop assist on take-off or landing)
Camel	A spin in which the body is in a continuous arched line from head through free foot while remaining no less than parallel to the floor
Camel spin	a spin wherein the body is in a continuous arched line from head through free foot while remaining no less than parallel to the floor
Color commentary (CC)	a style of sports broadcasting in which a commentator provides additional insights and analysis during a live event, often using anecdotes, personal experiences, or background information to provide context and add entertainment value to the broadcast. Colour commentary is typically provided by a second commentator who works alongside the play-by-play announcer
Combination spin	A spin in which the position is changed or the spinning edge is changed, or both, without involving a change of feet
Double/triple axel	2/3 Turn Jump performed from a LOF take-off, counterclockwise rotation, to a ROB landing (no toe-stop assist on take-off or landing)
Double/triple Lutz	a 2/3 full turns jump from a LOB take-off with a right (r) toe-plant, counterclockwise rotation, to a ROB landing (no toe-plant on the landing)
Double/triple toe loop	a jump in which the skater takes off from the back outer edge of one skate,

	makes two/three full rotations in the air, and lands on the back outer edge of the same skate
Double/triple toe loop	a jump in which the skater takes off from the back outer edge of one skate, makes two/three full rotations in the air, and lands on the back outer edge of the same skate
Fall	The lowering of the body by action of the tracing knee and ankle. The complete loss of balance involving body contact with the skating surface
Flip	A Full Turn Jump from a LIB take-off with a right (r) toe-plant, counterclockwise rotation, to a ROB landing (no toe-plant on the landing)
Foot sequence	See footwork.
Footwork	Specialized intricate steps used as an interpretive ingredient of a free skating/pairs program
Free Program	a figure skating competition segment that allows skaters more creative freedom to showcase their skills and artistry, typically performed after the short program. Skaters have more flexibility in terms of the elements they choose to perform and the music they skate to
Hip lift	a figure skating lift in which the lifter raises the partner off the ice with one hand under the partner's hip and the other hand holding onto the partner's leg. The partner's free leg is extended in the air while the lifter moves across the ice
LIB	Left Inner Back
LOB	Left Outer Back
LOF	Left Outer Forward
Loop	An edge that spirals in, half circles around, and spirals out to cross itself
Lutz	A Full Turn Jump from a LOB take-off with a right (r) toe-plant, counterclockwise rotation, to a ROB landing (no toe-plant on the landing)

One-foot turn	A turn without the change of feet
Open turn	A turn with the free leg behind the body after the turn
Overhead lift	In pairs, a lift in which the woman is held aloft (above the man's head) by using one or both arms extended above his head in a locked position
Pattern	The course in which a skater/team travels during a free skating/pairs' routine
Play-by-play reporting	a style of sports broadcasting in which a commentator provides a detailed account of the action and events taking place during a live event, often describing each play, movement, or decision made by the players or teams. Play-by-play reporting typically includes the names of the players, the score, the time remaining, and other relevant information, and is intended to provide a comprehensive and accurate account of the game or match
Press lift	a figure skating lift in which the lifter lifts the partner above his/her head with arms extended and the partner pushes down on the lifter's hands or arms to help elevate him/herself. The lifter then holds the partner in the air for a period of time while moving across the ice
ROB	Right Outer Back
Rotation	A full turn
Salchow	A Full Turn Jump from a LIB take-off, counterclockwise rotation, to a ROB landing (no toe-stop assist on take-off or landing)
Score	The total of grades given by an individual judge to a skater or team for the requirements of an event of a contest
Sequence	A related series of steps or turns
Shadow Skating	In pairs, skating movements done simultaneously by partners without

	contact
Short Program	a figure skating competition segment that is typically the first of two segments and consists of a set of required elements that must be performed within a certain time frame
Sit spin	A spin in which the seat is lower than the employed knee
Spin	A series of continuous revolutions around an axis that passes through a portion of the body
Stance	A stationary position preceding a start
Technical panel	the ISU judging system
Toe loop	a jump in which the skater takes off from the back outer edge of one skate, makes one full rotation in the air, and lands on the back outer edge of the same skate
Toe loop	a jump in which the skater takes off from the back outer edge of one skate, makes one full rotation in the air, and lands on the back outer edge of the same skate
Toe-loop	a jump in which the skater completes a turn in the air while launching from and landing on the outside edge of the same foot. This jump is started with the aid of the supporting foot.
Toe-Plant	The correct use of the toe-stop of the unemployed skate to assist the take-off and/or landing of a jump as provided in the description and requirements of the jump executed
Turn	A change of direction of skate or skates
Twizzle	A turn of one revolution executed in less than one beat of music
Two-foot turn	A turn produced with both feet by changing from one foot to the other
Upright spin	A spin in which the body remains in a standing position

