

ACTIVITY 1

A qualitative analysis of an MBM report – identifying the features of spoken and written language and markers of infotainment.

In the first part of the workshop, the students will conduct an analysis of a selected minute-by-minute (MBM) report of a football game. An MBM, alternatively called play-by-play commentary, is one of the most popular online/electronic sportswriting genres/registers. According to many researchers, it incorporates features of both spoken and written language; more specifically, it is said to be a hybrid of a football match report (published online or in a newspaper) and TV/radio live commentary. However, in some electronic media outlets, MBMs are a form of infotainment, which is defined as “the practice of presenting serious or instructive subjects in a style designed primarily to be entertaining” (Collins English Dictionary).

Following my overview of the MBM as a register, the participants will be asked to analyze a sample MBM to identify markers of written and spoken language as well as MBM’s distinctive features, many of which are related to infotainment (puns, irony/sarcasm, colloquial vocabulary, etc.). Finally, the students will attempt to link these lexico-grammatical features to the situational characteristics of the MBM register (e.g. participants, production circumstances, communicative purposes, etc.).

ACTIVITY 2

Identifying metaphors in football discourse

This section of the workshop will start with the presentation of the basic concepts and tenets of Conceptual Metaphor Theory as developed by Lakoff and Johnson. This theory posits that metaphors are not merely figures of speech but actually figures of thought that structure the way we perceive the world. Conceptual metaphor involves the presence of two domains: the source domain, composed of metaphorical expressions (linguistic metaphors), which provides insights into the target domain.

The main objective of this activity is to show that football (or a football match) as the target domain can be conceptualized in many different ways. The students will be asked to analyze several football match reports to identify metaphorical expressions which are linguistic realizations of the most salient conceptual metaphors that structure the discourse of football reporting. The analysis will solely be based on English language sources; however, the rationale behind this activity is to demonstrate that this framework can be successfully applied in contrastive studies of metaphors (with the use of multilingual corpora).