PRAGMATIC STRATEGIES USED IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK SPORTS COMMENTATORS' SPEECH

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Abstract. This thesis examines the major pragmatic strategies employed in English and Uzbek sports commentators' speech from a comparative perspective. Particular attention is paid to descriptive, evaluative, predictive, interpretative, intensifying, mitigating and audience-engagement strategies. The study demonstrates how these strategies help commentators describe ongoing events, express attitudes, predict possible developments, interpret sporting situations and maintain interaction with the audience. The analysis also reveals both common and language-specific features in English and Uzbek sports commentary. While both languages share similar pragmatic functions determined by the real-time nature of sports broadcasting, certain differences can be observed in the linguistic realization of evaluation, emotional expression, mitigation and collective identification. The research contributes to the study of sports discourse, comparative pragmatics and media linguistics.

Keywords: sports commentary, pragmatic strategies, sports discourse, media discourse, evaluation, prediction, interpretation, audience engagement, English language, Uzbek language, contrastive analysis.

Sports commentary represents a specific type of media discourse characterized by spontaneity, time limitation, emotional intensity and direct dependence on the events taking place during a competition. A sports commentator does not merely describe what is happening on the field. The commentator also evaluates players' actions, predicts possible developments, interprets tactical situations and maintains the audience's emotional involvement. Therefore, the analysis of pragmatic strategies used in commentators' speech is important for understanding the communicative and functional characteristics of sports discourse. The purpose of this study is to identify and compare the main pragmatic strategies used in English and Uzbek sports commentators' speech. From a pragmatic perspective, a strategy may be understood as a communicative mechanism selected by a speaker to achieve a particular intention and influence the listener's interpretation of an event. In sports commentary, such strategies are closely connected with the rapid development of sporting events and the necessity to provide information in an expressive and comprehensible form.

One of the most frequently employed pragmatic strategies is the **descriptive strategy**. Its main function is to inform the audience about current actions and changes occurring during a match. English commentators often use short and elliptical constructions such as "Saka into the box. Cross comes in. Header!" Similar syntactic compression can also be observed in Uzbek commentary: "To'p jarima maydonida. Uzatma. Zarba!" Such constructions demonstrate the principle of linguistic economy, which is determined by the real-time nature of sports broadcasting. Another significant strategy is the **evaluative strategy**. Commentators continuously assess players, teams, referees and particular sporting situations. English expressions such as "Brilliant finish," "Excellent defending," or "A poor decision" directly communicate the commentator's attitude. Comparable Uzbek constructions include "Ajoyib zarba," "Mukammal himoya," and "Noto'g'ri qaror." Evaluation allows the commentator to influence the audience's perception and to emphasize the significance of particular actions.

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The **intensification strategy** plays an important role in creating emotional involvement. In English commentary, lexical intensifiers, repetition and exclamatory structures are frequently employed: "Absolutely incredible!", "What a fantastic goal!" or "A massive, massive chance!" Uzbek commentators similarly use expressions such as "Nihoyatda ajoyib gol!", "Juda katta imkoniyat!" and "Ajoyib! Ajoyib natija!" In both languages, prosodic means, including increased pitch, loudness, tempo and pauses, further strengthen emotional impact. The **predictive strategy** is used when commentators anticipate subsequent events. English examples include "This could be dangerous," "There may be another chance," and "The goal could come at any moment." Uzbek commentators may use corresponding constructions such as "Bu xavfli vaziyatga aylanishi mumkin," "Yana bir imkoniyat bo'lishi mumkin," or "Gol istalgan paytda yuz berishi mumkin." Modal verbs and epistemic expressions indicate probability rather than certainty and contribute to the creation of suspense. Another important pragmatic mechanism is the **interpretative strategy**. While descriptive commentary reports visible actions, interpretative commentary explains their possible causes and consequences. For instance, an English commentator may state: "They are pushing higher because they need more control in midfield." An Uzbek commentator may similarly say: "Ular markazda ustunlikni qo'lga kiritish uchun oldinga ko'proq chiqishmoqda." This strategy demonstrates that commentary includes not only observation but also tactical and analytical interpretation. The **audience-engagement strategy** is also characteristic of both English and Uzbek sports discourse. Expressions such as "Look at the movement," "You can see the space here," and "Watch what happens next" directly orient the viewer's attention. Uzbek equivalents include "E'tibor bering," "Ko'ryapsiz," "Mana bu harakatga qarang." Although such utterances formally resemble directives, their main pragmatic function is to establish interaction with the audience and guide its perception of the sporting event. A further strategy concerns **mitigation**. Sports commentators often need to criticize players or referees without making their judgment excessively categorical. English expressions such as "Perhaps he could have done better" or "I am not sure the referee got that right" soften criticism. Uzbek commentators may employ "Balki bu vaziyatda yaxshiroq harakat qilish mumkin edi" or "Hakamning qarori biroz bahsli ko'rinadi." Such constructions demonstrate the role of politeness and face management in sports media discourse. The comparative analysis shows that English and Uzbek sports commentary share several common pragmatic strategies because both function under similar communicative conditions. Description, evaluation, prediction, interpretation, emotional intensification and audience engagement may therefore be regarded as universal pragmatic features of sports commentary. However, differences can be observed in their linguistic realization. English commentary often favours concise and direct evaluative structures, whereas Uzbek commentary may more frequently combine evaluation with explanation and culturally marked forms of collective identification, such as jamoamiz ("our team") and futbolchilarimiz ("our players").

In conclusion, pragmatic strategies constitute an essential component of sports commentators' speech. They enable commentators to describe events, express evaluation, predict developments, explain tactical situations and establish emotional contact with the audience. The contrastive study of English and Uzbek commentary demonstrates both universal tendencies determined by the nature of sports broadcasting and language-specific features influenced by linguistic and socio-cultural conventions. Further investigation of these strategies may contribute to the development of comparative pragmatics, media linguistics and sports discourse studies.

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