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STYLISTIC FEATURES OF THE UZBEK LANGUAGE AND ISSUES OF SPEECH CULTURE IN SPORTS JOURNALISM TEXTS

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Abstract: This article examines the stylistic features of the Uzbek language and the main issues of speech culture in sports journalism. Particular attention is paid to the use of sports terminology, expressive language, metaphors, evaluative vocabulary, and linguistic devices that influence readers' and viewers' perceptions of sporting events. The article also discusses common linguistic challenges in sports media and proposes practical recommendations for improving language accuracy, clarity, and stylistic appropriateness in sports journalism. The study emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between expressiveness and linguistic standards in contemporary sports media.

Keywords: sports journalism, Uzbek language, stylistic features, speech culture, sports terminology, media discourse, expressive language, linguistic accuracy, journalistic style.

Sports journalism has become an important part of contemporary mass communication. It informs the public about sporting events, presents the achievements of athletes, analyzes competition results, and contributes to the development of public interest in sport. In Uzbekistan, sports journalism also plays a significant role in promoting national sporting traditions, highlighting the achievements of Uzbek athletes, and encouraging young people to participate in physical education and sports.

Language is the principal instrument through which sports journalists communicate information, interpret events, and influence public perception. The effectiveness of a sports media text depends not only on the accuracy of the information provided but also on the appropriate selection of vocabulary, sentence structure, stylistic devices, and communicative strategies. Therefore, the study of linguistic features and speech culture in Uzbek sports journalism is relevant to both linguistics and media studies.

Sports journalism combines several functions, including informative, analytical, evaluative, and persuasive communication. A short news report about a competition requires precise and objective language, whereas a live commentary may include emotional expressions, comparisons, and vivid descriptions. An analytical article, in turn, requires logical argumentation, specialized terminology, and a well-organized presentation of facts.

The purpose of this article is to examine the stylistic characteristics of the Uzbek language in sports journalism, identify important issues related to speech culture, and suggest practical ways to improve the linguistic quality of sports media texts.

Sports journalism represents a distinctive form of media discourse in which informative accuracy and expressive language frequently interact. The stylistic features of Uzbek sports journalism are particularly evident in sports news, television commentary, interviews, analytical articles, and online publications.

One of the most important characteristics of sports journalism is the combination of standard journalistic language with expressions that convey movement, competition, tension, and emotion.

Journalists often use vivid verbs, descriptive adjectives, comparisons, and metaphors to make sporting events more understandable and engaging for their audiences.

For example, expressions such as *"the team strengthened its position," "the athlete demonstrated outstanding performance,"* and *"the match reached its decisive stage"* communicate sporting developments in a concise and expressive manner. Their Uzbek equivalents can include *"jamoa o'z mavqeyini mustahkamladi," "sportchi yuksak mahorat namoyish etdi,"* and *"uchrashuv hal qiluvchi bosqichga yetdi."*

Metaphors are also common in sports journalism. Expressions such as *"the team fought its way to victory"* and *"the athlete opened a new chapter in sporting history"* create vivid images and strengthen the emotional effect of a report. However, metaphorical language should not replace factual accuracy. Journalists must ensure that figurative expressions do not distort the meaning of an event or exaggerate an athlete's achievements.

Another important stylistic feature is the use of evaluative vocabulary. Words such as *"remarkable," "convincing," "unexpected,"* and *"dramatic"* may help communicate the significance of a result. In Uzbek sports publications, expressions such as *"ishonchli g'alaba," "kutilmagan natija,"* and *"keskin kurash"* serve similar purposes.

Nevertheless, evaluative vocabulary should be used carefully. An excessively emotional or subjective description may weaken the objectivity of a news report. Consequently, sports journalists should distinguish between factual reporting and personal evaluation, especially when discussing controversial decisions, competition outcomes, or athletes' performance.

Terminology is one of the fundamental components of sports journalism. Every sport has its own system of specialized concepts related to rules, techniques, equipment, performance, and competition organization. The accurate use of these terms helps journalists communicate information clearly and professionally. In Uzbek sports journalism, terminology comes from several sources. Some terms are established Uzbek expressions, while others are international terms adopted into Uzbek usage. Depending on the sport, journalists may use terms such as *"musobaqa," "bellashuv," "hakam," "jarima zarbasi," "to'p nazorati,"* and *"saralash bosqichi."* Internationally recognized terms may also be used when they are appropriate to the context and familiar to the intended audience.

One of the challenges facing sports journalists is the inconsistent use of terminology. The same sporting concept may sometimes be expressed in different ways across media platforms. Such variation can confuse readers, particularly those who are not familiar with specialized sporting vocabulary.

Another challenge is the inappropriate use of foreign words when clear and widely accepted Uzbek equivalents are available. Although international terminology is necessary in many sports, unnecessary borrowing may reduce the accessibility of media texts.

For this reason, journalists and editors should follow the terminology established in the relevant sport and consult reliable dictionaries, official competition regulations, and federation publications. When a specialized term is unfamiliar to the general audience, a brief explanation can improve comprehension without making the text unnecessarily complicated.

Terminological accuracy is especially important in reports concerning refereeing decisions, competition regulations, technical performance, and disciplinary measures. A poorly chosen term may lead to an incorrect interpretation of an event. Therefore, professional sports journalism requires both linguistic competence and sufficient knowledge of the sport being covered.

Speech culture refers to the appropriate, accurate, clear, and effective use of language in communication. In journalism, it involves compliance with linguistic norms, logical organization of information, stylistic appropriateness, and respect for the audience.

In Uzbek sports journalism, speech culture is particularly important because media language reaches a broad audience, including young people and students. The language used in sports

broadcasts and online publications can influence public vocabulary, pronunciation habits, and attitudes toward the Uzbek language. One common issue is the use of unnecessarily long or complicated sentences. When journalists attempt to include too much information in a single sentence, the main message may become difficult to understand. Shorter sentences, clear logical connections, and carefully selected vocabulary generally make sports reports more accessible.

Another issue concerns grammatical and orthographic accuracy. Errors in spelling, punctuation, word formation, and sentence structure can undermine the professional quality of a publication. These problems are especially noticeable in online media, where rapid publication may take priority over careful editing.

Emotional excess can also affect speech culture. Live sports commentary naturally permits a greater degree of expressiveness than formal news reporting. However, emotional involvement should not justify offensive language, unsupported accusations, or disrespectful descriptions of athletes, coaches, referees, and opposing teams. "The new media representation of 'on-field' sports discourse presents an exciting opportunity for social linguists to engage with an uncharted, pervasive and mediatized discourse"[1].

A professional journalist should be able to communicate excitement without abandoning linguistic standards or ethical responsibility. Respectful language is particularly important when reporting on defeats, disputed refereeing decisions, injuries, or conflicts between participants.

Thus, speech culture in sports journalism involves more than grammatical correctness. It also requires an awareness of the communicative situation, the intended audience, the purpose of the text, and the possible social effects of the language used.

The development of digital media has significantly changed the ways in which sports information is produced and consumed. News websites, social networks, video platforms, and online broadcasts allow journalists to reach audiences quickly and interact with readers and viewers.

In Uzbek sports media, headlines sometimes rely on emotionally charged expressions to attract attention. Although an engaging headline can increase audience interest, it should accurately reflect the content of the article. Misleading headlines, exaggerated claims, and ambiguous wording may weaken public trust in sports journalism.

Social media comments and informal online discussions also influence the language of sports communication. Informal expressions can be appropriate in certain contexts, but professional media publications should distinguish clearly between conversational language and the language required for reliable reporting.

Digital tools can support the improvement of language quality. Electronic dictionaries, spelling checkers, editorial guidelines, and terminology databases can help journalists identify errors and maintain consistency. However, automated tools cannot always determine whether a term is appropriate to a particular sporting context or whether an emotionally expressive phrase is ethically justified. Human editorial judgment therefore remains essential.

Improving the linguistic quality of sports journalism requires cooperation among journalists, editors, language specialists, and sports professionals. Several practical measures can contribute to this process. First, sports journalists should strengthen their knowledge of Uzbek spelling, grammar, punctuation, and stylistic norms. Regular professional development and editorial workshops can help identify recurring language problems and improve writing practices.

"Each media sports text creates and adheres to its own rules of sub-genre and textual relations"[2]. Second, media organizations should develop and maintain sport-specific terminology lists. Such

[1] Caldwell, D. "Sounds of the Game: An Interpersonal Discourse Analysis of 'On-Field' Language in Sports Media." Discourse, Context .Media, 2020, Vol. 33, Article 100363. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2019.100363

[2] Rowe, D. Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2004, p. 118.

resources should include preferred Uzbek terms, explanations of specialized concepts, and guidance on the use of international terminology. This would promote consistency across articles, broadcasts, and digital publications.

The Uzbek language offers extensive stylistic resources for communicating sporting events effectively, vividly, and accurately. Metaphors, expressive vocabulary, specialized terminology, and concise sentence structures can make sports journalism informative and engaging. However, their effectiveness depends on appropriate use and compliance with the norms of professional communication.

The analysis presented in this article indicates that speech culture in sports journalism should be understood as a combination of linguistic accuracy, terminological competence, stylistic appropriateness, factual responsibility, and respect for the audience. These qualities are important in traditional publications as well as in digital media, where the speed of communication may increase the risk of linguistic and factual errors.

Improving sports journalism therefore requires systematic attention to language education, terminology standardization, editorial review, and professional development. Particular importance should be attached to the preparation of future journalists and sports specialists who can communicate sporting information in clear, accurate, and culturally appropriate Uzbek.

Further research could examine authentic Uzbek sports media texts from different genres, compare the language of television commentary and online publications, and identify recurring stylistic and grammatical patterns. Such research would provide a stronger empirical basis for developing recommendations to improve language quality and speech culture in Uzbek sports journalism.

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