

Temporal Arrangements and Humanistic Narrative in Live Sports Commentary

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Abstract: Live sports commentary is both a limited-time event and a narrative. Following Xia Luobin's study of intervention timing in table tennis commentary, this paper investigates how the organisation of time affects the production of humanistic discourse in live sports broadcasting. Time should not be regarded merely as a technical parameter for operating; rather, at the level of entry points, pauses, replay windows, score-based emphasis and the transition from exposition to interpretation, there are all kinds of means to present commentary in a more accessible way for the audience. Collect research on live commentary, replay talk, media sports discourse and sports communication to discuss case studies of Xia's table tennis commentary. It presents a three-stage model of the action time: action time, transition time and reflection time; each stage can support a different type of humanistic expression, such as tactical empathy, athlete characterization and emotional orientation, or value narration. Therefore, the paper believes that time is a necessary condition for high-quality live commentary and proposes an application path to improve contemporary sports broadcasting in a fast-paced competitive environment.

Keywords: Live Sports Commentary, Temporal Arrangements, Humanistic Narrative, Table Tennis Broadcasting, Replay Talk, Sports Discourse.

1. Introduction

Live sports commentary has achieved some remarkable results in recent years and has raised the public's awareness of real-time events significantly through the media. The narrator of a work can add sounds or music; a playwright adds dialogue and narration. In the current era of media, given that people watch sports through television, streaming platforms, short highlight videos, and social media, the quality of commentary now affects both how clearly we can understand the game and how much emotion we feel about it. Therefore, the commentary can be regarded as both a discussion of sports and a way to organize time and culture.

Table tennis is a fast-moving sport that is thus prone to this problem. The speed of the rallies, the frequency of turning points, the compact format of points and sets, and the close connection between camera language and tactical details require commentators to decide continuously when to speak, when to pause, when to explain, and when to let the image and arena sound take precedence. These decisions are not neutral. At the wrong time, the intervention will be dull for the audience and disrupt the visual harmony of the rally. Well-timed intervention, on the other hand, can illuminate tactical reasons and emotional reasons for the performance and reveal the human meaning in athletics.

Xia's research on the time of table tennis commentary intervention provides a useful reference for this discussion. Pace, frequency, key moments and intervention laws are all related to it, and thus can provide a general case for theory construction. Under the title "Temporal Arrangements and Humanistic Narratives in Live Sports Commentary", this paper expands the operational concern to include a broader media and discourse system. It is held that time-series organization serves to extend the discussion of history and provide a basis for the entire process of humanistic study. Only when the commentator can control time effectively will sports broadcasting move beyond mechanical description to become the narration of pressure, personality, memory,

resilience and shared cultural values.

The following parts are arranged in the order listed above. Section 2 sets up the temporal logic for live sports commentary and integrates the main contents of the uploaded table tennis article into a larger media-discourse system. Section 3 shows that temporal organisation creates a setting for a humanistic narrative. Section 4 proposes practical paths for improving live commentary in contemporary sports production. Therefore, the conclusion considers what kind of time-sensitive content might be introduced in the future.

2. Temporal Logic in Live Sports Commentary

Research on broadcasting has long pointed out that live media are perceived as socially organised time rather than as neutral transmission. Scannell believes that broadcasting structures public experience through forms of liveness, attention and presence to make distant events feel both shared and immediate [1]. The organization of time in sports commentary is relatively prominent because the speech needs to respond promptly to the fluctuating developments of the game. Thus, the two roles of the commentator are to be present in the present moment and to give shape to that moment as communication. Due to the above reasons, the quality of a comment often changes over time after it has been posted.

Marriott's study of replay talk shows that live sports commentary does not merely present the sequence of events chronologically but continuously reconstructs time through alternation between the live moment and its mediated repetition [2]. Replay introduces a second-order temporality by reinterpreting what viewers have already seen, assigning meaning retrospectively, and shifting the focus of emotion. This can also help us understand the quick sports. Table tennis has a short action cycle; therefore, the commentator may need to wait until the end of a rally or a replay for a detailed explanation. Therefore, timing does not refer to how much or

how little one speaks, but rather to adapting the form of speech to different time periods in the broadcast.

Atmosphere creation is used as a basic norm for controlling the timing of commentary in the uploaded article. Based on literature analysis, corpus analysis and interviews, it was found that table tennis commentary still has problems such as uneven pace, infrequent commentary in some parts, and a delayed response to key and exciting rallies. To address the above problems, the five practical laws in this study are introduced: the law of score change, the law of game value, the law of atmosphere creation, the law of technical analysis, and the law of lens application. The five laws can be regarded as a system of time. Score changes are times for commentary to re-focus on the audience; game value indicates a period when intervention needs to be strengthened due to higher competitive stakes; atmosphere creation determines whether the voice should be raised or reduced in favour of the ambient sound; technical analysis determines when an explanation should be added without disrupting the visual display; and lens application links the timing of commentary to the logic of camera selection and replay availability.

Scholars of sports discourse have further shown that the structure of the event also restricts the style of commentary. Tolson thinks that broadcast talk combines information, immediacy, judgment and entertainment in an unstable way that depends on the format and audience expectations [3]. Gerhardt's work on televisual sports commentary also shows that syntax, turn design and information packaging are strongly influenced by the speed of the sport and by production processes such as cuts, replays and graphic overlays [4]. Therefore, the problem of intervention timing is not merely a skill deficiency of the commentator but also a structural compromise involving speech, images, the rhythm of competition, and production technology.

Table tennis is a typical typical case. The uploaded table tennis study also shows that the major table tennis events have attracted considerable attention from television and digital platforms, and thus the timing of commentary is now a visible and practical problem in modern sports broadcasting. Given the attention at the time, any slight mistake will be magnified and thus affects how the general public perceives the power, tactics and emotions in sports. Time is therefore expected to be a basic content for sports communication.

3. Temporal Arrangement and Humanistic Narrative

Timing can organise commentary operationally and also serve the purposes of ethics and narration. Humanistic discourse in sports commentary does not refer to decorative language or strong emotions. Rather, it refers to verbal practices that restore athletes to a state of being persons with histories, emotions, vulnerabilities, choices and social meanings. Billings, Butterworth and Turman believe that sports communication is also a form of broad cultural narrative, and therefore, through broadcasting, identity and morality are constructed and public memory is formed [5]. Therefore, the humanistic commentary does not need to be factually correct. We need to organise some events that link sports behaviour with life and society for commentators.

Temporal arrangement offers these times. The commentator needs to speak less in the middle of a high-speed rally during the live game. Over-explanation at this stage will conflict with the image and reduce the impact of the contest

on the senses. Chovanec's studies on online sports broadcasting show that live commentary generates meaning through real-time sequencing, selection and judgment, and audience-oriented interaction [6]. Therefore, the action time should be relatively short and focused on introducing only the essential content. Such self-restraint is, in fact, a requirement for humanistic expression; otherwise, there would be too much talk and not enough life in sports.

Humanistic narration is relatively common during the transition period; that is to say, just after a rally or at the time of a scoreboard reset, the commentator will explain what has just happened. The law of score changes and the law of game value identified by Xia are particularly relevant here. A single point may only need to be scored, but a point at 9-9, match point, or after a long mental battle invites a different kind of talk. The commentator can explain what stroke was successful and why this point is important for confidence, patience, discipline, tactical courage, etc. In this way, time connects the mechanisms of a game with our own lives.

Replay time creates a more enriching space for humanistic narration. Marriott shows that replay commentary can reconstruct the past immediate moment and, thus, help broadcasters narratively reframe the action and guide interpretation [2]. When the speed of the picture is reduced and the pressure of live broadcasting is eased, commentators can have more time to study; for example, a player's hesitation before serving and receiving, their calmness during a tie-break at deuce, physical signs of fatigue, or the emotional regulation they need after making a mistake. Jucker has also discovered in his study of live text commentary that the real-time sports report can provide an extra narrative system to help organise the actions and evaluate them in an interesting way for the audience [7]. Replay is thus no longer only a technical addition but a narrative stage for cultivating emotions and culture among people of all ages.

Time is not the same everywhere, so the environment will be different. Atmosphere creation is listed as one of the main regulations for commentary time in the published works. From a humanistic perspective, atmosphere is the organisation of emotions that allows audiences to experience the shared feelings of the group through sound. Rowe's research on media sports shows how sports broadcasting participates in the cultural production of public emotion, collective identity and mediated belonging [8]. At a particular time, the commentator may need to reduce the volume of his speech and let the noise of the crowd or the breathing of the athletes express emotion silently. Speech that arrives a second too early will be redundant; at the right moment, however, one can add words that prolong the wait for suspense. Therefore, humanistic commentary does not need to state everything; rather, one can be humble enough to know when good sound, images or silences are sufficient on their own.

4. Applied Paths for Improving Live Commentary

A feasible system for live sports commentary can be built around three temporal divisions: the time of action, the time of transition and the time of reflection. Action time includes live rallies and should be brief, score-oriented, and provide verbal support for the visual field. Transition time occurs after the end of a point, rally or set to make short tactical assessments, add emotional colour and choose specific narratives. Reflective time refers to replay, timeout, interval

or extended production breaks in which commentators may present biographical information, psychological analyses, etc., about culture. The three parts of the five laws constitute a general time-based strategy for live sports broadcasting by Xia.

Therefore, commentators need to develop a concept that can be called differential speech density. Lewandowski's linguistic study of online sports commentary considers sports commentary to be a special media register with different forms based on the medium, immediacy and target audience [9]. Therefore, commentators should be silent during visually self-sufficient, high-speed parts and speak more often when an interpretive window has been opened by stoppages, replays or score changes. Such calibration is not a reduction in expressiveness, but rather a change in the time of expression to when it is more effective and less disruptive.

The second way is to integrate humanistic narratives with technical explanations and present them together. Many broadcasts mechanically switch between pure play-by-play and emotional anecdotes. A good way is to add a sense of people to the tactical discourse. For example, a comment on a serve variation might also be the result of self-discipline under pressure; an observation about rally patience could be due to emotional regulation; a note on shot selection may stem from either confidence or hesitation. As networked media for sports now spread highlights and clips across social platforms, Hutchins and Rowe have suggested that commentary has evolved into a portable interpretive frame that travels beyond the time of the game [10]. Therefore, the humanistic narrative should be concise, accurate and supported by observable evidence.

A third way is production coordination. The time of the comments should be in line with camera movement, replays, graphics and sound design. Xia's law of lens application correctly believes that commentary cannot be optimised in isolation from the visual grammar of the broadcast. Producers and commentators can work together to create a regular replay window, scoreboard announcement and tactical graphic, etc., so that the speech does not draw attention away from the picture. Gerhardt's analysis of televised commentary supports this production-sensitive view by showing that discourse form is shaped by the way television segments and displays action [4]. The production system will create a space for humanistic commentary.

The direction of change for commentator training is now focused on time management, not voice and knowledge. Sensitivity is the ability to perceive changes in the speed of speech, to know when silence has more impact than words, and to be able to convert a key point into a condensed narrative of character, pressure and significance. Xia's paper already indicates that such professionalisation has occurred by mentioning the time rule and presenting an empirical case. The following is a new form of control for time; at the same time, it will also serve as the basis for interpretation. The most outstanding live sports commentators today are not those who speak the most; rather, they are those who can organise their time well to grab attention and move people's emotions by creating stories.

5. Conclusion

The first rule of a live sports commentary is time

sequencing. As this paper has put forward, the idea of time is not just when something begins and ends; it also affects a person's feeling of being in action, suspense, interpretation and emotion. Table tennis is a high-speed sport with little time for the commentator to speak, so only a brief explanation and a short introduction are practical.

By extending the study of table tennis commentary to a general system for live-sports, this paper has demonstrated that temporal strategies can achieve a humanistic discourse. Action time is for the purity of the athletic moment; transition time is for brief analysis; and reflection time can be used to study character traits and values. Through this multi-level structure, commentary can go beyond the transmission of information and offer an experience of sport as human effort, judgment, risk, memory and shared emotions.

The future quality of sports broadcasting will depend more and more on this capacity for time and meaning coordination. With a large number of clips, second screens and fast-paced consumption by the public today, quiet commentary will no longer attract attention. Commentary that knows when to speak and when to remain silent, and how to connect the work with human life, will always be valued. Temporal literacy is therefore not a supplement to commentary professionalism, but rather an integral part of it.

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