

CAPÍTULO VI

Football, television, and infotainment to reshape spanish public opinion

David Puertas Graell
Universitat Ramon Llull, España

Introduction

‘This is Football’ (2019) is a documentary series on the Amazon Prime Video platform which begins with the following statement: “Football is emotion”. This British production is just one of the most recent examples where audio-visual culture and sport have demonstrated the strength of their union on a global level.

“I have come to the conclusion that I vastly prefer sporting documentaries to actual sport” (Heritage, 2019). These The Guardian editor words reflect the trend that has been developing for years, based on football, sports journalism, and entertainment. At the same time, represents a new form of relationship between those who are protagonists in the sports field, those who would like to be, and those who enjoy the sports experiences of others (Lewis *et al.*, 2021). The connections between the two contextual spaces, the one with those who make the news and the one with those who consume the news, have traditionally been linked through the figure of the sports journalist as an intermediary. As a result of the new forms of current communication, these two environments have been so severely shaken up that they are now positioned in the same environment.

It is emotion that enables the hybridization of different content production formulas today, including show, entertainment, drama, loyalty, and sports. Nowadays, knowledge is easily accessible, and sports dominate the media and individual agendas of many people. The installation of social networks as a habit in communication routines and interpersonal relationships, in addition to its propagation as an information source, has fostered a panorama in which sport and these new platforms act as heart rate meters. The constant supply and demand of sports content in the form of any type of event, audio-visual production or news has increased even more the pulse by which sports, and extra-sports relationships are measured.

This research arises in response to an academic gap in the conjunction of different factors that complete and explain the current situation of sports journalism in Spain. The relationship between athletes, journalists and the audience are undergoing constant transformation. This means, more than ever, that the media must find their place in a communication environment marked by pluralism and constant change. This has led to the prioritization of emotion and the mix of information and entertainment in recent years.

The purpose of this study is to observe sports television programs to determine how the different practices associated with infotainment have been adopted in the sports programs under study. In other words, it is intended to determine whether information is eliminated to make entertainment and its most common features in television and fiction part of sports journalistic content. All of this takes place within a context of media polarization (Usher *et al.*, 2018) when sports fans are increasingly trained or literate in terms of positioning themselves.

Are we witnessing the involution of sports journalism?

Literature review

In the past decade much research has focused on the role of fans (Coombs & Osborne, 2022). These “constitute the most active segment

of the media public, which refuses to accept without more what they are given and insists on their right to full participation” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 137). Based on the motivations postulated by Raney (2006, pp. 313-329), fans have eight motivations. These show, by way of summary, the reason why sports fans mobilize and unite, also through screens: Team loyalty; Fun; Mood control; The motivation of good stress; Incentives in life; Evasion; Sense of community and Economic incentives.

Based on these motivations, it makes sense to mention works focused on the impact that sports have on the emotional state of fans. An example is found in recent research focused on the variation in the self-esteem of people interested in sports, especially in football, with respect to game results (Knobloch-Westerwick *et al.*, 2019).

Thus, some followers elevate passion and obsession to the highest level while others may have a more casual relationship with the same team (Kahle *et al.*, 1996). Those who choose to share or extend the experience by consuming press, radio or televised media are also part of sports consumption (Hunt *et al.*, 1999).

As Brojakowski (2015, p. 31) argues, fans are, for some, regular viewers of different television programs. All of this closes its own circle with the possibility and inclination to interact with other viewers of the sporting event, as well as with the journalists, narrators, and channels in charge of broadcasting the different events or programs.

Para-social interaction needs to be mentioned as it is considered an important aspect of fandom. Levy (1979) described the hypothesis that the higher the probability of social interaction with a television character, the lower the para-social relationship with them. At the same time, the greater the para-social relationship, the greater the news consumption of that character.

This relationship between the fan phenomenon and the different television characters using sport and/or sports communication as an umbrella is justified, especially through football and its trivialization in the media in recent decades (Tunstall, 1971; Rojas Torrijos, 2016).

Gantz and Lewis (2014, p. 760) prioritize for this in a simple way because the fidelity of the signal, the size of the different screens, the rights to broadcast the different sporting events, among other factors, place television as the ideal medium for the fans to experience the sport.

News media use the most purely spectacular and fictional techniques prioritizing the exaltation of emotions, but also to attract attention in an exercise based on transferring and retaining audiences (García Avilés, 2021; Edgerly and Vraga, 2019). However, it remains unclear how and which of the different features of infotainment are incorporated into the television news routine (Berrocal *et al.*, 2014; Campos-Dominguez and Redondo García, 2015; Ortells, 2011; Martín-Jiménez *et al.*, 2022).

In recent years, sports communication has analysed related aspects in its many different forms. We followed the writing of some decisive authors, which has been useful to map the field of sports journalism (English, 2015) in its different facets. Similarly, this information has showed how sports journalism, the media and journalists have adapted to new forms of communication and relationships with the audience, in addition to taking advantage of technological innovations to tell other types of stories in a more attractive way (Soares Netto and Spinelli, 2021). Communication about sport allows the use of new formats and dialectics, as well as being able to generate an environment where, in addition to analysis and commentary, the different stakeholders can coexist.

For this study, the emergence of sport as a culturally and ideologically appropriate institution for capitalism and its consumer society must be considered (McChesney, 1989). That is, while sport grows in popularity mainly due to television paying it so much attention, the media industries generate enormous advertising revenues related to a very wide coverage of sport (Galily and Tamir, 2014, pp. 699-700). Thus, sports communication has achieved what Cushion and Lewis (2010) called *The Rise of 24-Hour News Television*. In this way, the incessant competition to achieve the best data in audience control has

led to the use of sport “as an antidote against audience fragmentation” (Martín-Guart *et al.*, 2017). The battle for attracting and keeping audiences is transferred to how a quadruple appreciation product is communicated and sold (Domínguez Pérez, 2009), where spectacularism allows information to be relegated to entertainment.

To sum up, sports communication face new challenges related with the inevitable settlement of platforms like TikTok or Twitch, in charge of rethink the role of communication in times of disruption and journalism based on business models focused on infotainment (Ortells, 2011; Thussu, 2011) and the attention economy (Goldhaber, 1997). In addition, prioritizing sports content has configured a market niche with an extensive and multiple mass of public captivated by all kinds of formats. Thus, sport fits into any television genre, it allows different types of discourses, accepting frames that range from the most imperturbable to the slyest (Gallardo-Camacho *et al.*, 2016; Genovese, 2010). This hybridization has progressively contaminated different journalistic genres with a structure based on a polarised debate, passion (Lacroix, 2005), audience engagement and talk shows.

Research Objectives

RO1: To determine how the different practices associated with infotainment have been adopted in the sports programs under study.

RO2: To know the existence of a reduction of information with the intention of incorporating entertainment into sports journalistic content.

Methodology

Methodology is based on 125 hours of television content analysis of a sample spread over 70 broadcasts of coverage among the four selected programs. Being aware of the diversity in terms of the units that content analysis allows to quantify, in this work we focus on several of them, such as thematic units (Krippendorff, 2004,

pp. 107-109) or technical aspects such as camera zoom movement or other production effects that can lead to a more sensational style (Grabe *et al.*, 2001). In addition to the different features associated with infotainment (Redondo García, 2011), staging has also been taken into consideration, and what happens on the set has an important value for presenting communication (Bruun & Frandsen, 2014).

The analysis period includes from March 1, 2018, to November 30, 2018. The methodological technique of constructed weeks has been used (Riffe *et al.*, 1993). Semi-structured interviews have also been conducted with the anchors of these programs (Josep Pedrerol - *El Chiringuito de Jugones* -; Francesc Garriga - *El Club de la Mitjanit* -; Juan Carlos Rivero - Estudio Estadio -).

The worksheet is divided into two blocks with the aim of detecting infotainment features during the programmes. On the one hand, the block that collects the identifying data of the programmes, on the other hand, the television content analysis made up of the following categories: staging; TV genre; thematic; sources of information and infotainment features.

To provide context, when we talk about sources of information, we refer to the individual or material that provides data of interest. Thanks to a systematisation focused on the appearance or not (1 or 0) of the different types of sources of information used (as with the infotainment features) in each section, at the end of the analysis it has been possible to establish a percentage coding based on the degree of presence of each of the selected elements. The quantification of all these data will be stratified according to a range composed of the following variables: 'no presence', 'low presence' (1%-25%), 'medium presence' (26%-50%) and 'leading presence' (51%-100%). Thus, the quantitative results will be classified with respect to the criteria detailed in the following paragraph.

The four analysed programmes are: *Estudio Estadio*, *El Club de la Mitjanit*, *Deportes Cuatro* and *El Chiringuito de Jugones*. *Estudio*

Estadio, which first appeared in 1972, is the oldest sports television program in Spain among those that continue to be broadcast. The format is broadcast on Teledeporte, a sports-themed free-to-air television channel belonging to Televisión Española. It is schedule from Sunday to Thursday, from 23:00 to 00:30, approximately, despite the different changes and adaptations that it has undergone or incorporated throughout its long history.

El Club de la Mitjanit, broadcast from Sunday to Friday from 23:00 to 01:00, approximately, was a sports talk program, especially focused on football and FC Barcelona news. Esport3 is a free-to-air television channel belonging to the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation. This channel offers programming with a marked sports character.

Deportes Cuatro is a daily sports information program broadcast on channel Cuatro (Mediaset). Within the study period this program first had two main presenters, Manu Carreño and Juanma Castaño, until July, 2018. Juanma Castaño then left the program and suggested and encouraged changing the format. From that time on, it was led exclusively by Manu Carreño, accompanied by other collaborators such as Iturralde González (former referee) or Kiko Narváez (former Spanish football player).

El Chiringuito de Jugones is a television program focused mainly on football. It is broadcast from Sunday to Thursday from 00:00 to 02:45 on the Mega channel, belonging to the Atresmedia group. This format is presented and directed by Josep Pedrerol, normally accompanied by about eight collaborators, which can vary to a greater or lesser extent and in relation to the broadcasting of special programs.

Results

The following table shows the main identifying data for the programmes studied in this research (Table I).

Table I*General analysis data by programme*

Programme	Number of minutes of coverage analysed	Number of pieces analysed
<i>Estudio Estadio</i>	1645'	549
<i>El Club de la Mitjanit</i>	1859'	636
<i>Deportes Cuatro</i>	930'	947
<i>El Chiringuito de Jugones</i>	2567'	788

Below are the results related to each of the five categories (staging, TV genre, thematic, sources of information and infotainment features) considered in the methodology of this research.

Staging

The first aspect to be considered in the results of the analysis applied to infotainment is the 'staging' of the members (presenter and collaborators) of the programme.

In *El Club de la Mitjanit*, almost 80% of the total staging is divided between two options (Figure 1). Firstly, the 'talking head' (39.78%; n = 253), usually represented by the introduction to a news item by the presenter Francesc Garriga or Laia Tudel, also a presenter, albeit in the apparent background. In second place, the 'confrontational' staging (39.47%; n = 251), where presenters and collaborators are placed at the main table on the set.

As for *Estudio Estadio*, in 52.82% of the cases (n = 290) the programme revolves around a relaxed setting, where collaborators participate without being confrontational.

Figure 1*Staging of programmes*

The fact that *Estudio Estadio* belongs to Spanish public television also conditions it to compete with other cases in terms of economic resources and journalistic responsibilities which, in this case, could limit the capacity or the risk necessary to innovate in the direction of the TV-show, as its presenter details:

We are just one more programme in a corporation that has a lot of television programmes, and we are certainly not the top priority. We do what we can do and in the best possible way. (Rivero, presenter, 13 November 2019)

Francesc Garriga, presenter of *El Club de la Mitjanit*, also points in this direction:

What I would do in a private company has nothing to do with what I do here [Catalan public television]. I would dare to go much further. I must have a point of restraint that sometimes escapes us. Sometimes, surely, we hold back more than we should. (Garriga, presenter, 22 November 2019)

In other words, the provision of this type of space allows the programme and the audience to create a kind of agreement whereby

they accept the insertion of entertainment and humour into sports information. This is ideal when it is framed in well-differentiated sections and spaces. As Garriga acknowledges, the audience “gets angry” when they see this mixture, so the programme’s mission must be to present it in the least confusing way possible.

The opposite is true for private television channels. One of the outstanding aspects of *Deportes Cuatro* is the percentage of pieces in which the staging ‘does not appear’ (71.17%).

As for *El Chiringuito de Jugones*, more than 75% of the pieces (n = 600) are staged in which the presenter or collaborators appear and work ‘standing up’, ‘confronted’ or in a ‘relaxed’ way. In contrast, the element most deeply rooted in traditional television news journalism, the representation of the news by means of a ‘talking head’, does not play a very prominent role, with 17.26% (n = 136). After these data, the statement made by its presenter, Josep Pedrerol, about television sports journalism in Spain is pertinent:

I don’t understand television without being a show for a very simple reason, people have the right to be entertained. There are many platforms, many applications that allow people to be entertained, why shouldn’t sport be entertainment? We are wrong if we think that serious journalism is boring journalism, but no, journalism can be very serious, but more entertaining. That’s what we do, journalism, the most important sports news comes out of *El Chiringuito de Jugones*. But we also entertain. Don’t ask people to be bitter at 2am. (Pedrerol, presenter, 17 February 2020)

TV Genre

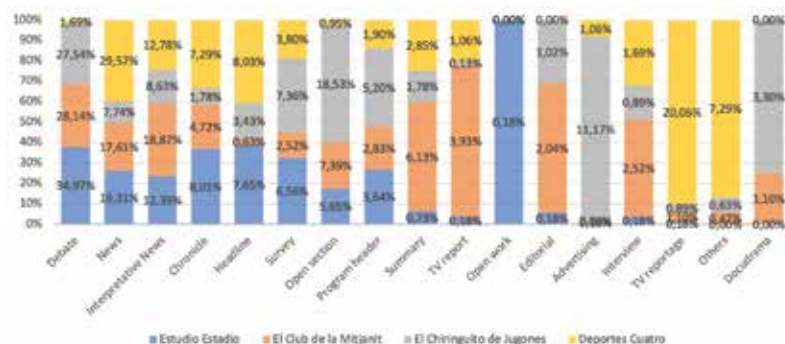
This section reveals how does each television journalistic genre contribute to the shaping of diverse ways of staging.

Crossing categories of staging and TV genre (Figure 2) *Estudio Estadio* obtains 34.97% (n = 192) of the pieces that are focused on debate, followed by news (19.31%) and interpretative news (12.39%).

This information is useful to describe what would be a prototypical *Estudio Estadio* programme.

The ‘chronicle’, ‘headlines’, ‘survey’ or ‘open section’ do not exceed 10% in any case. However, they do account for more than a quarter of the total content broadcast. Regarding how the set space is used, 63.79% of the times that staging appears in a relaxed way, it does so through debate.

Figure 2
TV genres of programmes



Estudio Estadio does not encourage adding entertainment, excluding the exploitation of debate as a television genre or the appearances of the collaborator Fernando Ramos. The almost non-existent role of genres such as reporting, capable of animating or offering an innovative counterpoint to the programme through information, reflects the lack of coexistence between information and entertainment in this section. Moreover, no interviews or reports are included.

El Club de la Mitjanit also praises the presence of debate (28.14%), although to a lesser degree. The news is interpretative (18.87%), more than rigorous. This generates the insertion of opinion and improvisation, also present in open sections (7.39%) to any content.

Thus, the presenter is shown standing when presenting his editorial at the beginning of the programme (38.46%) and in the for-

mulation of surveys (34.62%), as well as in the initial results samples just after the previous genre. It is interesting to see how the open sections, one of the most used after debates and any type of news, are also shown standing (11.54%), as an example that any staging is possible within this type of complex-to-classify situations.

In terms of confrontational staging, debate is the most widely represented mode. This behaviour, which is more conducive to confrontation than the calm attitude reflected in the relaxed staging, means that more interpretative news items (13.15%) are included in the main programme than strict news items (1.99%).

The staging as a 'talking head' is the most used. News or interpretative news stories account for more than 68%. The figure of the talking head is also used for other usual genres such as the chronicle, TV reportage and to give way to interviewees and TV reports, totalling 18.98%. This is related to the intention of *El Club de la Mitjanit* to remain aligned with the dissemination of information, preserving traditional and news values.

The open sections and interpretative news are the ones with the greatest presence of a relaxed setting (65.57%), where the presenter, but also the collaborators, take on a relaxed posture, with a more colloquial tone and where opinions and humour are allowed.

Regarding the private channels, on *Deportes Cuatro*, 29.57% (280) of the cases studied are news items, compared to 12.78% (n = 121) news with some interpretative nuance. In second place are TV news reports with 20.06% (n = 190). Headlines, with 8.03% (n = 76), provide the programme with the essence of its historical connection with the news, however, other genres such as the chronicle, with 7.29% (n = 69), or interviews, with 1.69% (n = 16), have a more circumstantial role despite their importance in descriptive and informative terms.

The importance of the 'talking head' staging has traditionally been a determining factor in the representation of news in the tele-

vision format. For this reason, it is necessary to differentiate between the genres that appear in this modality and those that take place when the presenter is standing. The news, the summary and the TV report are the most relevant cases, with 32.30% (n = 19), 18.64% (n = 11) and 15.25% (n = 9).

Since September 2018, standing staging is presented as the main modality of *Deportes Cuatro*. News, (23.08%) or interpretative news (13.94%), and TV reports (15.38%) are the most important due to the number of occasions in which they are shown.

In the case of *El Chiringuito de Jugones*, almost 30% (n = 217) of the pieces analysed lead to a debate or discussion between the programme's guests or collaborators. This is consistent with the prominence of this type of genre in the selected television format. An example of this is the almost null dedication to sports information through TV reports and interviews with protagonists (0.89%; n = 7).

Looking at the order of importance in terms of the staging of the programme's assets, the genres that take place standing up (31.09%; n = 245), being the ones that appear most frequently, have a different distribution of the genres represented than those that occur with a relaxed or confrontational staging.

After advertising (26.94%; n = 66), the second most used case in terms of stand-up staging refers to those interpretative news items (17.55%; n = 43) aimed at positioning the topic on the agenda and allowing the contributors and the presenter to offer their point of view.

As for the staging representing the confrontation, the second most used by the programme (27.03%; n = 213), almost 90% of the pieces are represented by the debate (88.73%; n = 189).

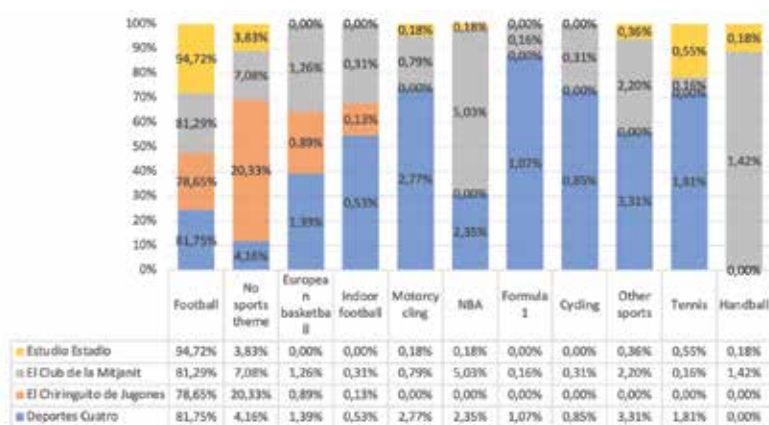
How collaborators are positioned, one in front of the other, makes it possible to cross speeches, sometimes even in a personal way, polarizing the subject matter and usually placing the audience in favour or against one side or the other.

Thematic

In terms of thematic, between 78.65% and 94.72% of all the pieces are devoted exclusively to football (Figure 3). Thus, there is no substantial difference in the ownership of the channels when it comes to football sports content.

Figure 3

Sports thematic used by programmes



This footballisation of sports content also offers a focus on the main teams according to the territoriality of the producers. In other words, except in the case of *El Club de la Mitjanit*, which is based on Barcelona and where FC Barcelona occupies more than 30% of the total number of football pieces, Real Madrid occupies the first position in terms of the team that receives the most coverage in *El Chiringuito de Jugones*, *Deportes Cuatro* and *Estudio Estadio*. It is worth mentioning that the latter three programmes take place in the Spanish capital, so there is an important influence on the editorial and agenda of the programmes. Seen in another way, the polarisation of sports content in this format in terms of the representation of Spanish football teams is called into question by the over-representation of Real Madrid, which doubles the cases of its supposed biggest rival,

FC Barcelona, in the case of *Estudio Estadio*, and trebled in the case of *El Chiringuito de Jugones*.

It has been possible to observe differential characteristics in the framework chosen to deal with football information and teams related. In *Estudio Estadio*, 10% of the pieces dedicated to football focus on the role of sports stars, especially in terms that have little or nothing to do with the sport. This way of representing or enhancing the treatment of celebrities over other points of view in football or other sports is one of the ways in which *Estudio Estadio* approaches infotainment practices more related to sensationalism, rumour, and the private lives of elite players. This practice is similar in the case of *El Chiringuito de Jugones* (5.25%), with the exception that they use this information to fuel possible speculation or controversy.

Celebrities also have certain relevance on *Deportes Cuatro* and *El Club de la Mitjanit* (6.92% and 3.87% respectively). In none of the case studies does women's football account for more than 1% of the pieces analysed.

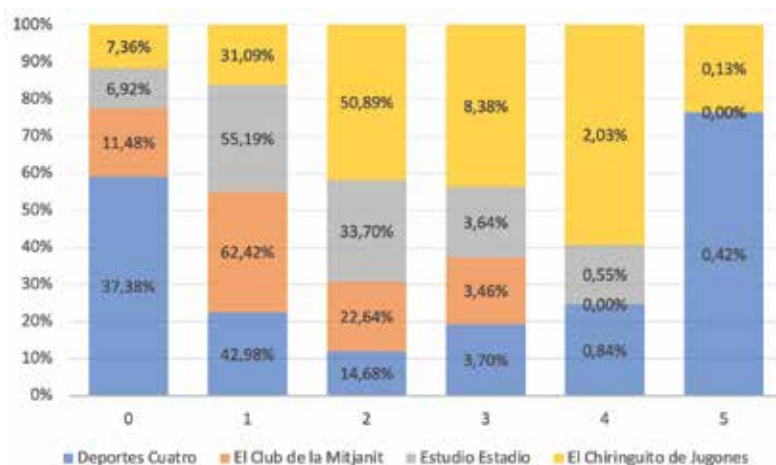
Sources of information

The next section focuses on the number of sources of information used in each piece (Figure 4), as well as the main typology used in each of the case studies.

Both *El Club de la Mitjanit* and *Estudio Estadio* exceed 50% of the pieces in which they use only one news source. Regarding private television, there is a notable difference between *Deportes Cuatro*, which prioritises pieces with a single news source (42.98%), followed by those without any news source (37.38%), and *El Chiringuito de Jugones*, with 50.89% of pieces with two news sources and 31.09% with a single news source.

Figure 4

Number of sources of information by programmes



The speed of the news and the serialisation of the programmes, broadcast practically every day, contribute to this use of sources of information. That situation is complemented by data on the amount of one type of source of information prevailing over the rest.

In *Estudio Estadio*, the influence of the ‘collaborators on set’ is such that their appearance goes beyond the space obviously dedicated to their involvement: the ‘debate.’ Thus, it is possible to observe how their interventions are spread across other types of genres such as the chronicle (10.39%), the news (8.45%) or the surveys (6.76%).

In *El Club de la Mitjanit*, the trust in the collaborators, considered by the director and presenter himself as one of the most important sports journalists on television, as well as the format of the programme, means that the informative weight of the programme rests on their opinion. Thus, on-set collaborators appear in 61.65% of the total number of sources detected by typology (463 out of 751), while they appear in 72.80% of the pieces analysed (463 out of 636).

In *El Chiringuito de Jugones*, the citizens also have a leading presence, as happens with the collaborators on set, although to a lesser extent. In this sense, the importance of the contributors as sources of the programme, creators of content and with a past related to sport that allows them to recount their experiences or obtain a certain credibility due to their relationship with a certain club should be highlighted above all. This makes them protagonists, as well as their dramatized reactions.

There are no scriptwriters. It is the cheapest programme in terms of scriptwriters, there are none. There are no characters either, the characters are not characters, the characters are created by television. They are people who have a very marked personality and television turns them into characters. We are not creating a character. The character of Tomás Roncero existed 20 years ago without appearing on television, he was the same, only now we have put a camera on him, and people know Tomás Roncero as he is. (Pedrerol, presenter, 17 February 2020)

This, however, might not entirely fit with the statements made by the production technician of *El Chiringuito de Jugones*:

Sometimes, for example, with Juanma Rodríguez, we have talked about all that. Hey, what should I put on this? More tense music... Then, depending on each person's way of being, you accompany it with one music or another. As for the effects, it's the same. The effects are more to accompany what they are saying, the phrases of each of them, which is what characterises each of them. When he comes in, you put a phrase. People assimilate that sound with the character, and it makes them laugh more. (del Val, production technician, 17 February 2020)

In the case of *Deportes Cuatro*, the involvement of collaborators on set goes far beyond debates, which account for barely 7% of the cases in which their appearance has been detected. The intrusion of comments, evaluations or information provided by them creeps into genres such as news, more than 17% regardless of whether they have

been considered interpretative or purely informative, but also in other categories such as TV reports (10.62%) and chronicles (9.73%).

Infotainment features

In this last category, the number of infotainment resources used in each piece was considered, as well as the most common typology in each of the programmes analysed.

Thus, *Estudio Estadio* is characterised by 35.69% of the pieces studied in which three, four or five of the ten established features appear simultaneously. This allows us to mention a certain consolidation of some of these infotainment features.

79.97% of the appearances of these traits are characterised by 'standardization', 'subjectivity', 'humour', 'colloquial language' and 'personalisation'. All these resources have a medium presence in relation to the total number of minutes analysed. 'Drama', 'emotionality', 'speculation' and 'hyperbolic language' are those with a low presence, totalling 11.69%.

In *El Club de la Mitjanit*, more than 70% of the pieces have none, one or two of the features considered. In this case, almost 50% of the pieces have at least the trait of subjectivity or humour.

The predominant role of these two attributes with a medium presence can be explained by the role played in the programme by the collaborators, who tell stories or personal tastes and experiences in the first person to justify their arguments or opinions.

Regarding sports programming on private channels, *Deportes Cuatro* is characterised by the fact that almost 30% of the total number of cases observed have the sum of three, four, five or even six of the resources previously considered in the analysis. This figure becomes even more valuable when we discover that only 17.11% of the pieces do not have any of the features detected.

Except for 'humour', 'speculation', 'emotionality' and 'standardization', the rest of the features exceed 10% in terms of presence. The 'personalisation' of news or TV reports, for example, reaches 21.41%, followed by 13.43% of the pieces that have, in some way, a certain degree of 'subjectivity'. Similarly, language also scores highly, with more than 20% for 'colloquial' and 'hyperbolic'.

The construction of the hero's discourse is more evident than in any other case with *Deportes Cuatro*. 'Personalisation' reaches almost 40%, standing out with a medium presence over any other feature. 'Subjectivity' and 'colloquial language' exceed 20%, despite having a scarce presence, as does the remaining part. Only 'emotionality' and 'standardization' are traits with a presence of less than 10%.

El Chiringuito de Jugones stands out because in more than one in four pieces (26.14%) there are at least two of the characteristics considered. Furthermore, in 42.77% of all the pieces analysed there are at least three or more of the different infotainment features.

Among the most important features, humour stands out with 17.87% (n = 344) and subjectivity with 16.99% (n = 327). The sum of standardization (12.57; n = 242) to the two previous features results in almost 50% of the total sample, which translates into a high value of the role of these three features, without underestimating the role of others such as colloquial language, personalisation, or fragmentation. Thus, six of the ten features considered have a medium presence in the programme.

Discussion and conclusion

There are several factors that determine the influence on the coexistence of information and entertainment. One of them is the use of stand-up staging. This option is used in different ways, when it is used to give strict information, but also to formulate surveys, to dedicate advertising space, to deal with interpretative news or even to create open sections where anything can happen. It is wor-

th mentioning that the surveys are mainly created to create conflict, allowing a colloquial tone, or including humour on the part of presenters and collaborators. Regarding the use of different genres, traditional journalism formats, which require time and resources, such as interviews or TV reports, are not being used. All of this has been replaced by debate and opinion, creating a panorama of the tertulialisation of television sports journalism. Debate creates an environment where the importance falls on the contributors' opinion to the detriment of a more in-depth analysis based on facts. This responds to the temporary gain of ground in genres where interpretation and opinion prevail, even in spaces dedicated to the broadcasting of news or which presume to have an informative style.

The findings of this study clearly show that, after categorizing topics of each program, it is important to show that there is one of the current trends in the media sports agenda: the so-called "Footballization" content. This means that football gain importance in the media compared to other sports.

Entertainment plays a decisive role in conceiving these programs as part of the television show that finds in football the ideal space for applying techniques for attracting and retaining audiences. Among these techniques, those that have been analysed in this research stand out, including for example emotion and conflict. These are, therefore, values that reach out to the feelings of certain viewers, fans who are hooked on all the information, news and rumours on the subject that interests them: football and their [national] team.

This television formula, which uses information for ludic purposes, has led to a feeling of sports misinformation characterized not only by what is or not said, but also by how it is presented and the way in which opinions and issues are positioned in the agenda.

It is necessary to remember that three of the four analysed programs are focus on the journalism genre discussion. This is something that favours the appearance of features as subjectivity and

standardization. In addition, the use of humour and personalization generates moments of dispersion where news or the topic of discussion is the least important.

The programs analysed here adopt different infotainment practices, determined according to the various features and methodologies applied in previous research (Berrocal *et al.*, 2014; Campos-Dominguez and Redondo García, 2015). The case of *Estudio Estadio* is reflected in colloquial discourses or using supposedly humorous moments that serve to remove the program from the rigor expected of such a classic format belonging to public television. *El Club de la Mitjanit* is characterized by the scenography and the differentiation of sections that have a greater or lesser degree of entertainment. Here there is less possibility of confusion, which can result in an audience who is more satisfied with the product they receive; however, the hybridization between information and entertainment is greater. *Deportes Cuatro* is the representation of the constant modification and the necessary concern for eliminating information to incorporate entertainment into sports journalistic content. The program includes an increasing number of sections designed to create a more dynamic and less formal environment, even incorporating spaces for imitating famous personalities. In this case, the fictional treatment of the information takes on special relevance due to the insertion of post-production techniques that make the content more of a spectacle. *El Chiringuito de Jugones*, despite the number of elements or features detected, stands out especially for its theme. In this case, it is no longer just an intentional selection of certain sports news but rather how this news is presented. The presenter, Josep Pedrerol, represents the position of the program while the collaborators jump into the ring to defend their interests and opinions. In this sense, *El Chiringuito de Jugones* develops a strategy that increasingly imports the meta-discourse of the program itself and its commentators, now also protagonists, rather than sports news. However, the use of opinion and subjectivity is common in all the analysed cases. This also occurs with the footballization of sports content (Tunstall,

1971; Rojas Torrijos, 2016) and the polarization of media discourses (Usher *et al.*, 2018).

Sports programs use different techniques related to infotainment such as colloquial language, humour, drama, or a dynamic staging. All this occurs mainly in spaces for debate where journalists and his opinion become the true protagonists. Focusing exclusively on football (Frandsen, 2019) allows programs creating narrative lines based on emotions and replacing information with entertainment.

This is especially interesting in a context of sports communication where the fans and spectators of the football product have consumed all kinds of rumors, leaks, even representations or dramatized reconstructions. It is also interesting because of the presumed ease of conviction in sports news related to the interests of the fans, who are more interested in believing what benefits their team and harms their rival.

This is related to the lack of reliability and credibility of the Spanish media, which is increasingly polarized and interested in confrontations or determined to choose a side and use the issues on the media agenda according to their interests. This information is useful especially if we consider that the traditional and generalist media continue with a strategy derived from the attention economy.

References

- Berrocal, S. G., Redondo García, M., Martín Jiménez, V. & Campos Domínguez, E. (2014). La presencia del infoentretenimiento en los canales generalistas de la TDT española. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 69, 85-103.
- Brojakowski, B. (2015). Understanding Television Enjoyment in the Social Media Era. In: Slade, A., Narro, A. y Givens-Carrol, D. (2015). *Television, social media, and fan culture*. Lexington.
- Bruun, H. & Frandsen, K. (2014). Making Sense of Television Entertainment: an aesthetic approach. In *Fernsehen. UVK Verlagsgesellschaft*, 39-51.

- Campos-Domínguez, E. & Redondo García, M. (2015). Implicaciones éticas del infoentretenimiento televisivo. *Comunicació: Revista de Recerca I D'anàlisi*, 32(1), 73–89. <https://doi.org/10.2436/20.3008.01.130>
- Coombs, D. S., & Osborne, A. C. (Eds.). (2022). *Routledge Handbook of Sport Fans and Fandom*. Routledge.
- Cushion, S. y Lewis, J. (2010). *The Rise of 24-Hour News Television: Global Perspectives*. Peter Lang.
- Domínguez Pérez, J. P. (2009). Ensayo sobre la cuádruple espectacularidad del periodismo deportivo. *Razón y Palabra*, 14(69). <https://doi.org/10.5944/educxx1.17.1.10708>
- Edgerly, S., & Vraga, E. K. (2019). News, entertainment, or both? Exploring audience perceptions of media genre in a hybrid media environment. *Journalism*, 20(6), 807–826.
- English, P. (2015). Mapping the sports journalism field: Bourdieu and broadsheet newsrooms. *Journalism*, 17(8), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884915576728>
- Frandsen, K. (2019). *Sport and mediatization*. Routledge.
- Galily, Y. & Tamir, I. (2014). A Match Made in Heaven?! Sport, Television, and New Media in the Beginning of the Third Millennium. *Television & New Media*, 15(8), 699–702. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476414541553>
- Gallardo-Camacho, J., Lavin, E. & Fernández García, P. (2016). Sports television programmes and their relationship with the social audience on Twitter in Spain. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 71, 272–286. <https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2016-1095en>
- Gantz, W. & Lewis, N. (2014). Sports on traditional and newer digital media: Is there really a fight for fans? *Television & New Media*, 15(8), 760–768. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476414529463>
- García-Avilés, J. A. (2021). El reportaje de infoentretenimiento: evolución del género en las televisiones generalistas en España (1990–2020). *Revista de Comunicación*, 20(2), 171–188.
- Genovese, J. (2010). *The challenges of sports television reporting in the contemporary sports-media complex*. The Pennsylvania State University.
- Goldhaber, M. H. (1997). The attention economy and the net. *First Monday*, 2(4).
- Grabe, M. E., Zhou, S. & Barnett, B. (2001). Explicating sensationalism in television news: Content and the bells and whistles of form. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 45(4), 635–655.

- Heritage, S. (01 de marzo de 2019). Winners are boring! The genius Netflix doc that celebrates losers. *The Guardian*. <https://bit.ly/3XiisEY>
- Hunt, K. A., Bristol, T. & Bashaw, R. E. (1999). A conceptual approach to classifying sports fans. *Journal of services marketing*.
- Jenkins, H. (2008). *Convergence culture: La cultura de la convergencia de los medios de comunicación*. Paidós.
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S., Abdallah, J. C. & Billings, A. C. (2019). The Football Boost? Testing Three Models on Impacts on Sports Spectators' Self-Esteem. *Communication & Sport*, 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167479519830359>
- Kahle, L. R., Kambara, K. M., & Rose, G. M. (1996). A functional model of fan attendance motivations for college football. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 5, 51-60.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content Analysis. An Introduction to Its Methodology*. Second Edition. Sage Publications.
- Lacroix, M. (2005). *El culto a l'emoció*. La Campana.
- Levy, M. R. (1979). Watching TV news as para-social interaction. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 23(1), 69-80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838157909363919>
- Lewis, M., Abdallah, J. C., Brown, K., & Billings, A. (2021). Multiscreen Football Enjoyment: Uses and Gratifications for Media Consumption of the National Football League. *Journal of Sports Media*, 16(2), 65-86.
- Martín-Guart, R., Lopez-Gonzalez, H. & Fernández-Cavia, J. (2017). El deporte como antídoto contra la fragmentación de audiencias: Un estudio exploratorio de los programas más vistos de la televisión en España (1989-2016). *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 72, 1027-1039. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2017-1206>
- Martín-Jiménez, V., Berdón-Prieto, P., & Reguero-Sanz, I. (2022). The precursors of infotainment? Debate and talk shows on Televisión Española (1980-1989). *Communication & Society*, 35(1), 119-135.
- McChesney, R. W. (1989). "Media Made Sport: A History of Sports Coverage in the United States" In: Wenner, L. (ed.). *Media, Sports, & Society*, pp. 49-69. Sage
- Ortells, S. (2011). *El infoentretenimiento en el periodismo audiovisual*. Universitat Jaume I, Spain.

- Raney, A. A. (2006). Why we watch and enjoy mediated sports. In: A. A. Raney y J. Bryant (Eds.). *Handbook of sports and media* (pp. 313–329). Lawrence Erlbaum,
- Redondo García, M. (2011). El sensacionalismo y su penetración en el sistema mediático español. Universidad de Valladolid.
- Riffe, D., Aust, C. & Lacy, S. (1993). The Effectiveness of Random, Consecutive Day and Constructed Week in Newspaper Content Analysis. *Journalism quarterly*, 70 (1), 133-139.
- Rojas Torrijos, J. L. (2016). La creciente banalización de los contenidos deportivos. *Cuadernos de Periodistas*, 31, 48–56.
- Soares Netto, R. & Spinelli, E. M. (2022). Innovation in Sports Media Content Production: An ESPN Brasil Case Study. *Brazilian Journalism Research*, 17, 680-705.
- Thussu, D. (2011). Infoentretenimiento S.A.: la ascensión de una ideología global. In A. Casero Ripollés y J. Marzal Felici (cds). *Periodismo en televisión: nuevos horizontes, nuevas tendencias*. Comunicación Social.
- Tunstall, J. (1971). *Journalists at Work*. Constable
- Usher, N., Holcomb, J. & Littman, J. (2018). Twitter makes it worse: Political journalists, gendered echo chambers, and the amplification of gender bias. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 23(3), 324-344. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1940161218781254>