

Evolving Writing Styles in Sports Journalism: Contemporary Trends in Romanian Local and Regional Press - A Case Study

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ABSTRACT: *This interdisciplinary study integrates journalism and stylistic analysis to examine contemporary sports discourse in the Romanian local press. It adopts a pragmatic linguistic approach to analyze the language used in local sports journalism, focusing on two regional newspapers, Jurnal arădean and Glasul Aradului. A dataset of approximately 10,000 sports articles from these publications, spanning print and online editions, provides a robust foundation for both qualitative discourse analysis and quantitative content analysis. The research identifies common linguistic and stylistic features, including the use of colloquialisms, journalistic clichés, and English-derived neologisms, while also revealing broader linguistic trends reflective of Romania's evolving local media landscape. By focusing on regional newspapers, this study fills an important gap, offering a localized perspective that complements wider theoretical frameworks in sports journalism research. Covering the period 2019–2023, the analysis highlights how sports journalism remains a resilient branch of specialized media amid the challenges posed by the 2007 media crisis in Romania. Ultimately, the study underscores the role of local sports journalism in capturing societal dynamics and conveying the competitive ethos inherent in regional sports reporting, while inviting further comparative and cross-cultural research in this field.*

KEYWORDS: Language and Style in Sport Article, Trends, Romanian Peculiarities in Writing About Sport.

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1. Introduction. Clarifications Regarding the Methods Used in The Study.

This study adopts an interdisciplinary approach, combining methods and theories from linguistics, journalism studies, and sports communication to analyze the stylistic features of sports journalism. This work synthesizes the main directions of analysis regarding the style of sports texts in Romania. The study provides an overview of the language used in sports journalism in the local and regional Romanian press, offering a synthesis of the main studies related to this field. It should be noted that the considerations regarding this particular writing language belong to relevant Romanian linguists. Their remarks generally discuss various particularities of this field, without specifying clearly analyzed periods or a significant number of articles reviewed. The practical analysis in our work focuses on the written press from the city of Arad (an important town, located on the border with Hungary), detailing the trends of the local-regional press in addressing the sports phenomenon in Romania. The stylistic/language particularities observed are illustrated with practical examples, collected between 2019 and 2023. The substantial number of texts analyzed led us to the conclusions of this study. Through the substantial number of texts reviewed (our analysis spans 5 years of study), we believe that our results are enlightening for tracing trends in the local-regional Romanian press in addressing sports. Of course, we believe these trends may also be relevant for other countries in the Central European bloc, where similar practices can be identified in the approach to sports texts.

With the emergence of a new media ecosystem, the traditional model of production, distribution, and consumption of print journalism is undergoing significant reconfiguration. Print media is steadily losing ground to the online press, which is gaining more appeal due to its free accessibility. Paying only for internet access, readers can browse numerous news websites without the need to purchase physical newspapers. The convenience of accessing online news, coupled with the ability to comment anonymously on articles, has further diminished interest in traditional print media (Neamțu, 2025b).

The economic crisis of 2006-2007 exacerbated these challenges, leading to downsizing in newsrooms and a reduction in the number of employed journalists. As a result, many journalists have had to take on multiple roles, covering a wide range of topics including politics, administration, culture, entertainment, economics, crime, health, and sports.

Since 2008, the local press in Arad has been facing a severe financial crisis, with many publications either shutting down or moving exclusively online. This shift has led to increased opportunism, partisanship, and a mercenary attitude among some journalists, who display loyalty to media owners and state structures in exchange for advertising revenue or job offers (Neamțu, 2025a). Many former print journalists in Arad, displaced by the collapse of the written press, have found employment in local administration (Neamțu, 2024).

Print media is slowly fading, with newspaper circulations plummeting. The remaining printed newspapers are shifting much of their content online, gradually abandoning in-depth articles, reports, interviews, and investigations in favor of brief news collections. Few local publications still produce content through the dedicated work of journalists, as many have become mere platforms for distributing pre-written press releases from various institutions. As a result, identical articles, with the same headlines and content, appear in both print and online outlets, often without any editorial input from journalists.

In this context, the sports section has managed to survive in the printed press. In my hometown of Arad, only two newspapers continue to be published in the traditional print format: *Jurnal arădean* and *Nyugati Jelen*, the latter in Hungarian. Both publications also have online versions, with a significant focus on sports coverage. In the summer of 2022, *Glasul Aradului* ceased its print edition but continues to operate an online version.

Local journalists in Arad are often perceived as working "for someone" rather than being part of a serious, independent press entity, whether in print or online. As a result, the media landscape in Arad County can be described as a "tool of influence" (Neamțu, 2022, 2023), rather than a channel for accurate and free information. The tone of journalistic discourse has become more hurried and superficial - "a speech that skims the surface of reality, refusing deep exploration" (Șimonca, 2009, p. 193).

In our research design we use both a qualitative analysis, discourse analysis, focuses on understanding language and style mistakes within the local sports press. We employ a qualitative analysis, specifically discourse analysis, which centers on examining and interpreting the language and style used in the local sports press. The goal is to identify and understand common mistakes or issues related to how language is used, such as grammatical errors, inappropriate tone, or stylistic inconsistencies, and how these might affect the quality and clarity of the journalistic content. This method helps uncover deeper insights into the ways language shapes communication and how effectively it conveys information in the sports media context.

We examine the nuances, tone, and overall quality of the content. Through discourse analysis, we aim to identify patterns, inconsistencies, and areas for improvement. For the quantitative aspect, we conduct a content analysis, tracking the frequency of specific words and phrases in headlines and articles. By quantifying language usage, we uncover common trends, overused clichés, and emerging neologisms. Our areas of investigation include: *Colloquial language* (we explore colloquial expressions frequently found in sports reporting. These informal phrases add a distinct tone but must be used judiciously); *Language clichés* (identifying clichés allows us to assess the originality and creativity in sports journalism); *Neologisms from English influence* (we pay close attention to the incorporation of English terms, especially in sports-related language); *Local-regional newspapers* (our case study focuses on two prominent local print newspapers, *Jurnal arădean* and *Glasul Aradului*, between 2019 and 2023). Insights from Arad's local-regional press likely reflect broader trends applicable to other Romanian local newspapers facing similar challenges.

Our combined qualitative and quantitative approach offers a comprehensive understanding of language dynamics in sports journalism, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement. While our study focuses on Romanian-language newspapers, the characteristics we identify are also present in other languages. As part of press language, sports reporting continuously evolves, adapting to changing trends, sometimes becoming blunt or, conversely, experimenting with bold new expressions.

We selected these two newspapers, *Jurnal arădean* and *Glasul Aradului*, because, despite the overall decline of the printed press, their sports sections have remained active and relatively stable. In many cases, the survival of the print edition has been closely tied to the popularity and consistency of sports reporting. Both publications also maintain online platforms, where the same articles are typically republished, allowing for comparative analysis between print and digital formats.

Our stylistic analysis, based on a corpus of articles from Arad's local press between 2019 and 2023, emphasizes the enduring relevance of sports journalism. Despite the media crisis in 2027, which caused many Romanian local publications to go bankrupt or shift entirely online, sports journalism persisted. This dynamic field blends tradition with innovation, offering valuable insights into societal changes. By analyzing local and regional press, we can see how sports reporting reflects these shifts and influences our understanding of broader social developments.

The research is based on a comprehensive analysis of approximately 10,000 sports articles published in two regional Romanian newspapers: Jurnal arădean and Glasul Aradului. These publications were selected due to their continued importance in the local media landscape and their active sports sections, which serve as rich sources for studying regional sports journalism practices. By analyzing a large volume of articles from both print and online editions, the study ensures a robust and representative sample of contemporary sports writing in this specific cultural context. This extensive dataset allows for detailed examination of linguistic features, stylistic trends, and thematic patterns that characterize the sports style within these regional outlets.

Arad, a significant urban center in western Romania, plays a strategic role in the country's local media landscape. As a border city with a diverse population and a dynamic cultural and economic environment, Arad serves as a representative case for analyzing the challenges and transformations facing local journalism in Romania. Its media outlets reflect both regional particularities and broader national trends, making it an ideal setting for investigating linguistic and stylistic developments in local sports journalism. By focusing on Arad's press, this study gains insight into the evolving nature of journalistic discourse in similar Romanian urban centers, thus offering conclusions that may be extrapolated to other regions experiencing comparable socio-economic and media-related pressures.

This study is important because it addresses a relatively underexplored area in Romanian linguistics and media studies: the stylistic and linguistic features of local sports journalism. By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, the research offers a nuanced understanding of how language is used in a specific yet influential branch of the press. The findings not only reveal the stylistic tendencies and recurring issues within the Romanian local media but also provide a methodological framework that can be applied to similar studies in other linguistic and cultural contexts. Given the increasing convergence of media practices across Central and Eastern Europe, and the global spread of sports-related English neologisms, this study may serve as a comparative point of reference for researchers interested in journalism, discourse analysis, language contact phenomena, and the evolving role of local media in a digitized world.

A clarification: the translation of the texts from Romanian was done by the author of this study, and the examples are also presented in their original Romanian form in the footnotes of the study. Some of the examples used in this study are drawn from my own published sports articles. I include them only for analytical clarity and hope the reader will understand this choice as a methodological necessity, not as a form of self-promotion.

Although this study focuses on two regional Romanian newspapers, the findings regarding the stylistic features of sports journalism may be relevant and useful for understanding sports reporting in other languages and contexts as well.

Our study focuses on regional Romanian newspapers to address a gap in existing research by providing a localized perspective that complements broader theoretical frameworks in sports journalism. By examining how common features in sports reporting, such as metaphorical language, exaggeration, and emotional expression, are specifically shaped by Romania's cultural and linguistic context, our research offers a detailed case study of regional media practices. This approach not only contributes to a deeper global understanding of sports journalism styles but also encourages foreign researchers to recognize the diversity and unique characteristics of local sports media. Furthermore, this methodology lays the groundwork for future comparative studies that integrate local analyses with international perspectives, aiming to develop a more nuanced and cross-cultural understanding of sports language and media discourse.

2. Sport and Style: A General Perspective.

The style of journalism plays a crucial role in shaping how information is conveyed and received by audiences. Effective journalistic writing must strike a balance between clarity, accuracy, and engagement, ensuring that readers not only understand the facts but are also drawn into the narrative. This balance is especially critical in sports journalism, where the fast-paced, emotional, and unpredictable nature of sporting events demands a writing style that is both vivid and concise. Sports journalism occupies a unique place within the broader journalistic tradition, characterized by expressive language, rhetorical creativity, and a tendency to blend factual reporting with elements of storytelling and entertainment. This section explores the general stylistic features of sports journalism, drawing on a detailed analysis of articles from two Romanian regional newspapers, *Glasul Aradului* and *Jurnal arădean*, over the period 2019-2023. By examining these texts, we aim to highlight how linguistic devices such as metaphor, hyperbole, and colloquialism serve to communicate the drama and excitement inherent in sport, while also reflecting wider trends in contemporary media discourse.

The style of journalism should be direct, clear, and concise, ensuring that the reader can easily comprehend the text while balancing the delivery of accurate information with the pleasure of reading. A compelling journalistic style not only informs but also engages the audience, transforming them into "indirect witnesses to the facts reported by the journalist" (Gaillard, 2000, p. 126). The ability to convey substantial meaning in just a few sentences—while doing so in an engaging and vivid manner—is considered a hallmark of effective journalism (Maguire, 1999; Whannel, 2001, 2008). This balance between informativeness and readability is especially vital in sports reporting, where the emotional and competitive dimensions of events must be communicated quickly and effectively. Sports journalism is often stylistically distinct, enriched with logical arguments, vivid imagery, and strategic rhetorical devices designed to maintain the reader's interest.

The style of sports journalism falls within the broader category of journalistic writing but stands out due to its dynamic and expressive character. In this study, we highlight the key stylistic features of journalistic writing and explore how they manifest in the more specialized realm of sports commentary. Our analysis, which focuses on the period between 2019 and 2023, reveals the unique linguistic and stylistic features present in sports articles from two Romanian regional newspapers: *Glasul Aradului* and *Jurnal arădean*. While the study is geographically and linguistically specific, we argue that the stylistic patterns identified, such as the use of vivid metaphors, hyperbole, and informal expressions, are also present in sports journalism across other languages and cultures.

Sport, by its very nature, embodies action, unpredictability, and emotion, all elements that lend themselves to vibrant, stylistically rich storytelling. The stylistic choices made in sports journalism are shaped by the need to convey movement, tension, victory, defeat, and human drama in a condensed and accessible form. As a result, we may say that sports reporting frequently blurs the line between information and entertainment. Unlike more formal news writing, sports journalism often adopts a more expressive, metaphorical, and dramatic style, drawing on literary devices such as personification, irony, and symbolism. This style is not only a reflection of the events being reported but also of the cultural significance of sport itself: a field where passion, identity, and performance intersect. Thus, the language of sports journalism serves not merely to describe events but also to construct a narrative that resonates with the audience's shared values and emotional investment in athletic competition.

These two newspapers were chosen because the sports sections have played a key role in sustaining their printed editions. Although both also operate online, much of the content, including sports reporting, is mirrored across platforms, offering a representative sample of

current local journalistic practices. From our study we saw that there is a growing tendency in news articles to blend factual information with the journalist's personal, often superficial, opinions (Neamțu, 2022, p. 69). This subjective approach is frequently conveyed through the use of descriptive adjectives such as "beautiful," "interesting," "cute," or "captivating" to characterize events.

"Grahovac, out from UTA! Svedkauskas in: An *interesting* goalkeeper"¹; The team's players made a *beautiful* figure; It was an *interesting*, exciting game for the supporters of the Arad team; Their game was at least *interesting*; *Interesting* subscriptions to the UTA football team². The adjective "interesting" is often used as an empty word, adding little to no new information. It is frequently employed in colloquial language, especially when one wants to avoid offending someone. When unsure or seeking to be polite, people commonly respond with "interesting." In this way, "interesting" becomes a general adjective that can be applied to a wide variety of situations, often lacking specificity or depth.

The sports section plays a significant role³ in the local newspapers analyzed. Sports journalism tends to follow a predictable structure, often focusing on celebrities and backed by thorough documentation⁴. By predictability, we refer to sports news related to scheduled events such as competitions, press conferences, and similar occurrences. However, there are also events triggered by prior statements, where journalists may ask questions like: What do you think about...? or Do you agree with...?

The analysis of 10.000 texts between 2019 and 2023 revealed that sports reporting often covers topics such as final results, information about opponents, financial aspects, player contracts, player statements, injuries, coaches, training methods, training camps, and special training sessions. Additionally, personal details of players are frequently highlighted, including aspects of their lives outside the field, often accompanied by suggestive photos (e.g., partying in clubs, affectionate gestures in malls or on the street, etc.).

As the sports journalist (3-time winner of Best Sports Journalist from Yorkshire, for *The Independent* and *Independent on Sunday*) observed, local sports pages predominantly feature news and feature articles. A feature is a hybrid journalistic genre—informative, yet often offering entertainment value as well. In this regard, the sports journalist must write in a way that captures the reader's attention and keeps them engaged (Andrews, 2006, p. 100).

"Internet journalism⁵ has many things in common with other forms of journalism. It requires good drafting, accuracy, impact and balance". (Andrews, 2006, p.175)

¹ Sfâra, Leo. (10.11.2017). *Glasul Aradului*, (2781), 11.

² Sfâra, Leo. (31.07.2018). Abonamente interesante la UTA. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXX, 8125), 7.

³ Maurice Mouillaud and Jean François Tétu, in *Presa cotidiană*, București: Ed. Tritonic, 2003, p.48, observed that after the political news follows the information called sensational (violence, politics, crimes, catastrophes) which constitutes between 20 and 25% of the total information in an newspaper. The rest is occupied by information of any kind, among which sport regularly occupies an important place.

⁴ See Andrews, Phil. (2005). *Sports Journalism. A Practical Introduction*, Sage publications of London, Thousand Oaks&New Delhi, p.92: "never assume – it makes an ASS out of U and ME. If in doubt, leave it out".

⁵ "The emerging online model is defined by «digital plenitude», with the Internet and WWW significantly lowering barriers of access and cost and thus increasing the number of media companies, sports organizations, clubs, and even individual athletes able to produce and distribute content for online consumption, [Brett Hutchins, David Rowe](#). From Broadcast Scarcity to Digital Plenitude: The Changing Dynamics of the Media Sport Content Economy. (10,4).

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1527476409334016>,<https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476409334016>, accessed:5.02.2023.

The distinctive style of sports journalism is shaped by the need to capture the dynamic, emotional, and often unpredictable nature of athletic competition. Our analysis of *Glasul Aradului* and *Jurnal arădean* reveals a journalistic approach that blends factual reporting with subjective commentary, vivid imagery, and rhetorical flourishes designed to engage readers and sustain their interest. The frequent use of general adjectives, such as *interesting*, alongside expressive metaphors and informal language, illustrates a stylistic trend toward accessibility and entertainment without sacrificing informational value. The focus on both on-field events and off-field personal details of athletes highlights the multifaceted role of sports journalism in constructing narratives that resonate with local audiences. Our study underscores how sports reporting in the regional Romanian press reflects broader journalistic practices while maintaining a unique voice that mirrors the cultural significance of sport as a site of passion, identity, and community.

3. Three Perspectives on Sports Articles.

Sports journalism occupies a unique position within the broader field of journalistic writing, blending factual reporting with elements of storytelling and specialized language. Its style reflects the dynamic and fast-paced nature of sports themselves, requiring clarity and precision alongside vivid expression to capture both the factual and emotional essence of athletic competition. Understanding sports articles demands familiarity not only with journalistic conventions but also with the technical vocabulary and cultural nuances specific to various sports disciplines.

This section of our paper explores three key perspectives on the language and style of sports reporting. First, the close relationship between sports language and technical terminology, including the use of abbreviations, symbolic figures, and numeric codes. Second, the influence of fiction and literary devices, such as metaphors and epithets, which enrich the narrative and engage the reader's imagination. Third, the position of sports language as a distinct style within literary language, characterized by its range from terse, data-driven commentary to more figurative and emotional expressions. Together, these perspectives illuminate the complexity and richness of the sports journalistic style.

3.1. Sports Terminology: A Specialized Technical Language.

The sports style is closely related to technical language, serving as a variant of it (Iordan, 1944, p. 341; Iordan, 1954, p. 23; Seche, 1959, p. 81). Romanian linguists argue that sports terminology clearly shares characteristics with technical language, particularly through the use of abbreviations, symbolic figures, and specific technical terms. The sports style has also redefined the meaning of numbers, so much so that a mathematician may need special initiation to fully understand the significance of numbers used in a sports article.

A.C. Milan-Galatasaray: 3-2 (3-0). Milan defeated the Galatasaray team with three goals, receiving 2 goals from the Turkish team. At the end of the first half of the match, the A.C.Milan team had scored 3 goals and had not received any goals.

In rowing, sample 2 + 1 or 8 + 1. (these are crews of 2 or 8 athletes plus one, the captain of the team)

Like numbers, abbreviations are specific to the international sports language (K.O. in boxing, FIFA etc.) You need sports knowledge and to be familiar with sports style to know what the journalist wants to say when he writes a title: "Big point, in min. 90 + 7!"⁶ The sports journalist

⁶ Sfăra, Leo. (25.09.2023). Punct mare, în min.90+7! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9415), 11.

aims to convey that the UTA football team scored an equalizer in the final minute of the match against FC Botoșani. To do this, they often embellish the numbers with game qualifiers, using expressions typically found in literary descriptions. This approach allows the journalist to soften the raw statistics, adding a layer of emotion that resonates with the reader and stirs excitement. By doing so, they transform the cold facts of the game into a more vivid and engaging narrative: UTA football team equalized incredibly; The match remained in a shadow cone; Iacob intervened amazingly and at the end of the football match, the miracle occurred, filling the hearts of the supporters with joy⁷.

The journalist refers to "the derby of suffering in C8,"⁸ a phrase that might confuse those unfamiliar with sports terminology. This expression is used to describe match number 13 of the Third Football League, where the teams from Ineu and Cermei will face off. The term "derby of suffering" is a figurative way to emphasize the intense struggle these two teams are experiencing as they battle to avoid staying at the bottom of the standings. While the phrase sounds dramatic, it highlights the critical nature of the match for both teams.

In conclusion, sports terminology functions as a specialized form of technical language, characterized by unique abbreviations, symbols, and numeric expressions that require specific knowledge to fully understand. This specialized language not only conveys factual information but also integrates literary elements to enhance the emotional impact of sports reporting. By blending technical precision with figurative and expressive language, sports journalists transform raw data into vivid narratives that engage readers and capture the intensity and drama of athletic competition.

3.2. The Fictional and Expressive Dimensions of Sports Style.

In sports reporting, the goal is often to immerse the reader in the atmosphere of the sport itself. Journalists frequently use metaphors and military terms such as "assault,"⁹ "battle," "duel,"¹⁰ "march," "attack," "defense," "blockade," and others to convey the intensity and drama of a match. Figurative language, along with familiar or colloquial expressions, are commonly employed. For example, a swimmer might be referred to as "the dolphin" or "the butterfly" depending on the style in which they excel, connecting their athletic skill with the qualities of the aquatic creatures. Furthermore, sports journalists tend to rely on synonymous chains to describe actions, providing variety in their language. For instance, a journalist might use a series of expressions like "to mark," "to score," "to give a goal," "to change the scoreboard," or "to reduce the score" to describe the act of scoring. As we will demonstrate in this paper, today's sports journalists enjoy using expressive phraseological units that capture the essence of different sports, such as "king sport" (football), "1st sport," "round balloon sport" (football), "white sport" (tennis), "celluloid ball sport" (table tennis), "gentleman's sport"

⁷ Sfăra, Leo. (25.09.2023). Punct mare, în min.90+7! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9415), 11.

⁸ Sfăra, Leo. (18.11.2022). Derby-ul suferinței în C8! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9205), 11.

⁹ Assault is used metaphorically to describe an intense offensive push by one team in a sports competition, as in: "the home team launched a relentless assault on their opponent's defense, bombarding the goal with a series of shots. Despite their efforts, the goalkeeper stood firm, denying them a last-minute equalizer", S.D. (26.10.2022). Voința Mailat preia comanda în Liga 6! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9188), 7.

¹⁰ A.V. (28.08.2023). Duel in the double final, Duel arădean în finala de dublu, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9395), 7. Unsigned article (28.03.2023). Duelul din cupă se joacă marți, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9292), 7. So, we do not have a *duel with a sword*, as in ancient times. The competition is seen as a metaphor of a confrontation of two parts. And let the best to win! Or: "The *duel* is played on Tuesday". It is about the Romanian Football Cup, which will be played on Tuesday, April 4, 7 p.m.

(fencing), "motor sports" (motorcycling), and "pedal sport" (cycling). These expressions reflect the unique identity and culture of each sport while adding richness and color to the writing.

In sports journalism, there is a tendency to use epithets with an absolute superlative value, such as "exciting,"¹¹ "thrilling,"¹² "extraordinary,"¹³ "wonderful,"¹⁴ "incredible,"¹⁵ "terrible,"¹⁶ "unprecedented,"¹⁷ "very great victory,"¹⁸ and "incredible triumph."¹⁹ These terms are often employed to emphasize the intensity and drama of a sporting event. In many cases, sport is depicted by journalists as a form of art, comparing the team to an orchestra and the coach to a conductor. Phrases like "under Coach X's vision, the team performed the most beautiful match of his career" or "with X at the helm, the team emerged triumphant" reflect this artistic framing of sports.

Additionally, a surprising victory might be described as a "theatrical coup,"²⁰ highlighting an unexpected or dramatic twist that catches the fans off guard. Linguist Tabacu (1967, p. 41) pointed out the excessive use of quotation marks in sports writing, referring to it as an "abuse of quotes." This overuse of quotation marks, along with the frequent use of hyperbolic language, contributes to a style that is often more emotional and subjective than strictly factual.

We believe that the fictional and expressive dimensions of sports style play a crucial role in engaging readers and bringing the excitement of sports to life. Through vivid metaphors, dramatic epithets, and artistic comparisons, sports journalists create a narrative that goes beyond mere facts and statistics, transforming events into compelling stories. While this style adds richness and emotional depth to reporting, it also introduces a subjective tone that balances factual accuracy with entertainment. Ultimately, this approach helps to capture the spirit and culture of sports, making the coverage more relatable and captivating for the audience.

3.3. The Literary Independence of Sports Language.

We could say that the sports style moves between two extremes: the brief, strictly technical presentation of the results of a sports discipline, and the lyrical, metaphorical commentary. From the area of literature, of the fiction style, the sports expression took over the quotes and the preference for the figurative meaning of the words²¹. We have this title: "«The youth» did not unlock"²² where *the youth* is put in quotes meaning that *the juniors of the UTA Academy football team lost again a football match with the Tâmpa Braşov team*. *Unlock* is used figuratively for an *unsecured* position on the football court. *Unlock* sends you to the idea of a *weak* performance/game.

¹¹ In Romanian language we have: *joc palpitant*.

¹² In Romanian language we have: *joc captivant*.

¹³ In Romanian language, *extraordinar* joc.

¹⁴ In Romanian language, *minunat* joc.

¹⁵ In Romanian language, *incredibil* joc.

¹⁶ In Romanian language, *teribil* joc.

¹⁷ In Romanian language, *rezultat fără precedent*.

¹⁸ The journalist writes: "Great victory in Craiova!" as if there is also "a smaller victory". Sfâra, Leo. (22.11.2022). *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9207), 7.

¹⁹ Sfâra, Leo. (8.02.2023). Atletico Arad a triumfat la Balkan Cup Braşov! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9258), 7.

²⁰ Scridon, Daniel. (3.10.2023). Prima victorie obţinută pe teren a fost întoarsă la masa verde. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9421), 7.

²¹ Rowe (2004) noticed a "media sports cultural complex".

²² Sfâra, Leo. (26.09.2023). Tineretul nu s-a deblocat , *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9416), 7.

The phrase "A generation of promising polo"²³ illustrates how the adjective "promising" adds an element of hope or potential, even if it doesn't offer new information from an informational standpoint. While "promising" implies a possibility of future success, it doesn't guarantee that the expectation will be fulfilled. In this case, the journalist uses the term to express hope for the AMEFA polo team, suggesting that they have the potential to achieve victory in the future. The adjective, while not providing concrete details, serves to inspire optimism about what lies ahead for the team."

"In sports language, the tendency of elliptical expression [...] was born as a sign of familiar language"(Seche, 1959, p.96). So, what differentiates the style of sports commentary from other texts in the press is the specialized terminology. (Romalo, 1983, p.471) In the evolution of the analyzed press I see a simplification tendency of the press language. Journalists prefer interjections: "Look, Look At This!", "WOW", "Shock and Horror". The exclamation point is often used: "Jobello, Transferred to UTA!"²⁴; "The Viitorul Arad Team Received Their Medals!"²⁵; "Amateurs With Professional Pretenses!"²⁶; " Be A Man! Show us That You Do Not Hold Your Teeth Against the Chair!"²⁷; "Miculescu Has Increased His Share!"²⁸; "Academia UTA, Six Points!"²⁹; "12 Years Together For Gymnastics!"³⁰; " UTA, Three Matches in Eight Days!"³¹; "Penalized For The Match Against F.C. Argeş!"³²; " UTA, Debut With F.C. Argeş!" - "UTA 2011 Got His Hands On The Trophy!"³³; " UTA, Poor Performance!" - "FCSB Agreed At The Price With UTA!" - "Motorca, Gold At The Olympic Festival!"³⁴; "We Have Eight Officials For League 3!"³⁵; "Serena Williams Is Retiring From Tennis!"³⁶; "Telonovela Aly Abid, At The End. He Has Arrived At The UTA Team!"³⁷; "Son of Simeone, At Naples!" - "Total Rift In Paris!" - "Romania, 27 Medals At The U15 Weightlifting!"³⁸; "Arad Has Two Balkan Judo Champions!"³⁹; "The Rowing, On Top Again!"⁴⁰; "Included In The Stage Team!"⁴¹; " Voința Club From Mailat Takes Command In League

²³ Scridon, Daniel. (15.06.2023). O generație de polo care promite. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9344),7.

²⁴ L.S. (26.07.2022). Jobello, transferat la UTA! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9123), 7.

²⁵ Scridon, Daniel. (5.07.2022). Viitorul Arad și-a primit medaliile! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9108), 7.

²⁶ Scridon, Daniel. (21.01.2022). Amatori cu pretenții de profesioniști! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 8996), 9.

²⁷ Scridon, Daniel. (26.01.2022). Fii bărbat! Arată-ne că nu ții cu dinții de scaun! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 8998), 7.

²⁸ L.S. (28.07.2022). Miculescu și-a mărit cota! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9125), 7.

²⁹ L.S. (1.09.2022). Academia UTA, șase puncte! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9149), 7.

³⁰ S.D. (25.08.2022). De 12 ani împreună pentru gimnastică! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9144), 7.

³¹ S.D. (18.08.2022). UTA, trei meciuri în opt zile! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9139), 7.

³² S.L. (29.07.2022). Penalizată pentru meciul cu FC Argeş! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9126), 7.

³³ Scridon, Daniel. (4.07.2022). UTA, debut cu F.C.Argeş!; UTA 2011 a pus mâna pe trofeu!, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9107), 7.

³⁴ Sfâra, Leo. (1.08.2022). UTA, reprezentatie slabă! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9127),7 ; Scridon, Daniel. (1.08.2022). FCSB s-a înțeles la preț cu UTA!; Motorca, aur la Festivalul olimpic, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9127), 7.

³⁵ Scridon, Daniel. (10.08.2022). Avem opt oficiali pentru Liga 3! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9134),7.

³⁶ Mediafax (10.08.2022). Serena Williams se retrage din tenis! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9134), 8.

³⁷ Sfâra, Leo. (19.08.2022). Telonovela Aly Abeid, la final. A ajuns la UTA! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9140), 9.

³⁸ L.S. (19.08.2022). Fiul lui Simeone, la SSC Napoli!; Ruptură totală la Paris!; România, 27 de medalii la CE de haltere U15!, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9140), 10.

³⁹ Scridon, Daniel. (6.09.2022). Aradul are doi campioni balcanici de judo! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9152), 7.

⁴⁰ S.D. (6.09.2022). Canotajul, iar la înălțime!, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9152), 8.

⁴¹ S.L. (27.07.2022). Inclus în echipa etapei!, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9124), 7.

6!"⁴²; "Romania's National Team Will Play In Arad!"⁴³; "Dan Cuedan Broke Up With Piros Security!"⁴⁴; "Incredible Match In The Cup!"⁴⁵

We may conclude that the sports style represents a distinct and independent form of literary language that balances technical precision with expressive, figurative commentary. It uniquely blends brief, factual reporting with metaphorical and elliptical expressions drawn from fiction, enriching sports narratives with emotional depth and optimism. This style is marked by specialized terminology, a tendency toward simplification, and frequent use of interjections and exclamations, all of which contribute to its dynamic and engaging nature. Ultimately, sports language stands apart within journalistic writing, reflecting both the specialized knowledge of the sport and the creative artistry of storytelling.

4. The Emphatic Tone: Exclamation Marks in Sports Language. A Stylistic Habit in Sports Reporting.

In sports journalism, the language used is often charged with emotion and urgency, aiming to capture the excitement and unpredictability of the games. One of the most visible markers of this expressive style is the frequent use of exclamation marks in headlines and articles. This punctuation, typically reserved for strong emotions or emphasis, has become a habitual tool for sports journalists seeking to engage readers and highlight the significance of events. However, this stylistic choice can sometimes border on excess, raising questions about its impact on the clarity and tone of sports reporting. This chapter explores the pervasive role of exclamation marks in sports media, analyzing how they function as both a device to convey enthusiasm and, at times, an overused element that may dilute the intended effect.

As evident from the examples analyzed in the Romanian newspaper *Jurnal arădean*, there is a noticeable tendency in sports writing to overuse exclamation marks. Almost every edition features headlines with exclamation marks. The journalist often uses them to convey admiration, anger, or disappointment. Interestingly, exclamation marks also appear in positive news, emphasizing enthusiasm or excitement. ("League 4: The Viitorul team takes the lead!"⁴⁶; "After Rednic's exigencies, Căpușă signed with UTA!"⁴⁷) but also when the subject of the news is negative ("Ubbink, Excluded From The Team!"⁴⁸)

Most of the time, as observed in the numerous examples presented, the exclamation mark serves no real purpose in the structure of the article; it does not add any new information to the headline: "Two Derbies In League 3!"⁴⁹ Or: "Juniors can hit!"⁵⁰ The journalist informs us that in the final match of the Football Youth League, the UTA team will face off against the Universitatea Craiova team, and they are on the verge of victory. The journalist expresses enthusiasm about the progress of the youth players. The news announces the upcoming match, using the verb "can" to convey the possibility of victory. However, we will see if this potential

⁴² S.D. (26.10.2022). Voința Mailat preia comanda în Liga 6! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9188), 7.

⁴³ S.D. (24.10.2022). Naționala României va juca la Arad! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9186), 7.

⁴⁴ S.D. (25.10.2022). Dan Cuedan s-a despărțit de Piros Security! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9187), 7.

⁴⁵ S.L. (21.10.2022). Meci incredibil în Cupă! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9185), 11.

⁴⁶ Sfără, Leo. (26.09.2023). Liga 4: Viitorul trece în frunte! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9416), 7.

⁴⁷ Sfără, Leo. (26.09.2023). După exitările lui Rednic, Căpușă a semnat cu UTA! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9416), 7.

⁴⁸ S.L. (20.10.2022). Desley Ubbink, exclus din lot! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9184), 7.

⁴⁹ Sfără, Leo. (29.09.2022). Două derbyuri în Liga 3! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9169), 7.

⁵⁰ Sfără, Leo. (25.05.2023). Juniorii pot da lovitură! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9331), 7.

transforms into reality on the day of the game, where "being able to master the game" might turn into actually winning it.

It is at least bizarre that the exclamation mark appears in a headline announcing the death of a journalist: "Journalist Florin Matei Left Us!"⁵¹ Even stranger to put the exclamation mark in a title, about *NOTHING*: "Nothing in Ploiești too!"⁵² The journalist wants to say that the UTA Arad football team cannot recover and lost the match with Petrolul Ploiești. In sport, *nothing new under the sun* means *nothing new under the scoreboard*.

The exclamation point can translate the journalist's indignation or admiration:

"After 16 years he equals his father!"⁵³ - admiration for the child who made his parent proud.

"Ready for the match with Italy!"⁵⁴ - the exclamation mark is there to say that the day of the football match has finally arrived. The Italian team is called *Squadra azzurra*, using a metaphor, which refers to the color of the team's shirts.

"In honor of Master Mihai Botez!"⁵⁵ - the journalist expresses his happiness that *The Judo Day* from Arad has reached its tenth edition. The Arad Judo Day celebrates Mihai Botez, the master of jodo who, in 2022, would have turned 100 years old.

"Balint has returned to UTA!"; "Chivu's Tears At The UTA Stadium!"⁵⁶ - here we can see the delight on the part of the journalist for the return of his favorite coach to the Arad team or admiration for the former football player, Dumitru Chivu, who - at the age of 83 - returned to the arena in Arad where he played between 1962 and 1968.

"Burtănete, In Two Finals!"⁵⁷ - here is the admiration for Romanian gymnast, Gabriel Burtănete, who qualified for the World Gymnastics Championship in Liverpool.

"The contest has reached the 8th round!"⁵⁸ - In this title, the sports journalist is delighted that the newspaper he works for can bring you prizes if you send a coupon to the sports newsroom. Here it is, the coupon has reached number 8! So it's a reason for the exclamation mark, which is a maximum delight for the journalist.

"One More disgrace To UTA!"⁵⁹ - the disappointment of the journalist that UTA football team, under the leadership of coach Ilie Poenaru, lost the game with FC Arges, with 1-0, and the situation is becoming more and more difficult. On the same page, another journalist is proud that "In League 5: Only Two Teams Are Undefeated!"⁶⁰

⁵¹ Scridon, Daniel. (30.09.2022). A plecat dintre noi ziaristul Florin Matei! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9170), 11. On the same page, Daniel Scridon signs another title with the exclamation mark: "Four gold medals!"

⁵² Sfâră, Leo. (7.11.2022). Mai nimic și la Ploiești!, translated: *Nothing in Ploiești too!*, where Ploiești is the name of a city from Romania, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9196), 7.

⁵³ Scridon, Daniel. (3.11.2022). După 16 ani își egalează tatăl. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9194), 7.

⁵⁴ Sfâră, Leo. (17.11.2022). Gata de meciul cu Italia! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9204), 7.

⁵⁵ Scridon, Daniel. (8.12.2022). În onoarea maestrului Mihai Botez! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9217), 7.

⁵⁶ S.D. (2.11.2022). Balint a revenit la UTA!; Lacrimile lui Chivu pe stadionul UTA!, *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9193), 7.

⁵⁷ Scridon, Daniel. (2.11.2022). Burtănete, în două finale! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9193), 8.

⁵⁸ Scridon, Daniel. (8.12.2022). Concursul a ajuns la Talonul 8! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9217), 7.

⁵⁹ Sfâră, Leo. (1.11.2022). Încă o rușine pentru UTA! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9192), 7.

⁶⁰ S.D. (1.11.2022). Liga 5: Doar două echipe neînvins! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9192), 7.

The tendency to use exclamation marks in the titles of sports articles is evident not only when announcing 1st place in a competition but also when discussing positions like 11th or 14th. The journalist aims to attract attention at any cost, making the exclamation mark feel almost mandatory. However, its frequent use in writing can quickly become tiresome.

"Atletico, second place in Valencia!"⁶¹

"UTA Academy, 11th place in Romania!"⁶²

The exclamation appears in tandem with metaphor, as in the title: "They are preparing to emigrate. In Sibiu or Mediaș!"⁶³. The article is not about any departure from the country. The football team from Arad will not be able to play on its own field. The lawn is damaged and is going to be changed soon.

The pervasive use of exclamation marks in sports journalism reveals the genre's inherent desire to connect emotionally with its audience. While these punctuation marks effectively convey excitement, admiration, and urgency, their overuse risks reducing their impact, turning emphatic expressions into mere clichés. The exclamation mark has become almost a trademark of sports reporting, reflecting the dynamic and passionate nature of sports culture itself. However, for sports journalism to maintain both credibility and reader engagement, it is essential to balance enthusiasm with restraint, ensuring that punctuation serves to enhance rather than overwhelm the narrative.

5. Latin Terms, Everyday Speech, and New Words in Sports Discourse. Blending Latin, Colloquialisms, and Neologisms in Sports Communication.

The language of sports is a dynamic and evolving form of communication that reflects not only the technical aspects of athletic competition but also cultural influences and linguistic creativity. This part of our paper explores how sports discourse incorporates a rich mixture of Latin expressions, colloquial phrases, and neologisms to convey the excitement, drama, and cultural context of sporting events. From the use of timeless classical references to the infusion of everyday speech and newly coined terms, sports language captures both tradition and innovation, making it accessible and engaging to a broad audience.

"Veni, vidi, vici"⁶⁴ is the famous Latin phrase attributed to Julius Caesar, which translates as "I came, I saw, I conquered." It was used by Caesar in 47 BC to announce his swift and decisive victory over the forces of Farnace in Pontus. This phrase, immortalized by the Greek historian Plutarch in his biography *The Life of Caesar*, was sent as a message to Rome to his friend Amantius, celebrating his quick and overwhelming triumph. In a similar spirit, on August 14th, 2022, Romanian newspapers used the headline VENI, VIDI, POPOVICI to mark the incredible achievement of David Popovici, who set a new world record in swimming. This headline plays on Caesar's famous phrase, highlighting the swimmer's swift success.

Sports language often incorporates Italian terms as well, such as *bella figura* and *fa presto*. *Bella figura* refers to the idea of performing well, emphasizing style and honor, regardless of the winner - both teams can have a "beautiful performance." *Fa presto*, meaning "take action" or "hurry up," is used in sports contexts to urge quick action or a sense of urgency,

⁶¹ Scridon, Daniel. (26.07.2021). Atletico, locul doi la Valencia! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIII, 8869), 7.

⁶² Scridon, Daniel. (26.07.2021). Academia UTA, locul 11 în România! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIII, 8869), 7.

⁶³ Sfăra, Leo. (29.08.2023). Se pregătesc să emigreze. La Sibiu sau Mediaș. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9396), 7.

⁶⁴ From lat. *venire* (to come), *videre* (to see) and *vincere* (to defeat).

reflecting the fast-paced nature of many athletic endeavors. These expressions enrich sports commentary, blending cultural references with the excitement of the competition.

There is generally a lapse in language in the written press, meaning that the content of local newspapers tends to become oversimplified, vulgar, and filled with colloquialisms (Neamțu, 2022, p. 68).

"In their endless pursuit of more readers and sensationalism, journalists seek the insolent, the strangeness that horrifies, the outrageous events, being tempted to treat the serious information in a soft manner". (Neamțu, 2022, p.67)

Thus, "although the Arad team asked to change the date of the match with the Rapid team, this was not done, trying to throw them off the track".⁶⁵ Or: "Dică is a «bundle of nerves» after the match against UTA"⁶⁶. Or: "Headaches for coach Rednic".⁶⁷ There is a tendency for sports events to be presented in the local Romanian press as sports *shows*: a team/individual show as in "Miculescu, one-man show".⁶⁸ That is why a majority of titles in local regional press are with exclamation marks, presented as great shows not to be missed: "Rugby between the past and the present!"⁶⁹; "Manchester City, qualified!"⁷⁰; "UTA, draw with CFR Cluj!"⁷¹; "Marius Vizer, belt 8 DAN!"⁷²; "Vados Arad, national vice-champion at chess!"⁷³; "Eight medals for the Municipal Sports Club of Arad!"⁷⁴. From an unmissable event to madness and triumph there is only one step: "Total madness in the third League!"⁷⁵; "Atletico Arad triumphed at Balkan Cup Brasov!"⁷⁶

Neologisms, as part of the vocabulary, are new words either recently borrowed from a foreign language or created through processes inherent to the language (such as derivation or composition). Neologisms serve as a direct and immediate reflection of changes in the lives of Romanian readers. A series of terms from sports have entered the Romanian spoken language, including: aut, corner, derbi, dribling, gol, goalkeeper, fitness, jogging, surfing, team, master, pick-up, parking, penalti, soft, sponsor, sprinter, star, stres, top, and sold-out.⁷⁷

"Wins for the Crișul and Pecica teams! Lipova was equaled at home in overtime! Modan managed a *hat-trick*, and the Progress team won in Sebiș".⁷⁸

⁶⁵ Sfâra, Leo. (3.07.2021). Deși arădenii au cerut mutarea meciului cu echipa Rapid, acest lucru nu s-a realizat, fiind duși cu zăhărelul. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIII, 8900), 7.

⁶⁶ Sfâra, Leo. (21.10.2022). Dică, un car de nervi după meciul cu UTA. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9185), 11.

⁶⁷ Sfâra, Leo. (29.08.2023). Bătăi de cap pentru Rednic. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9396), 7.

⁶⁸ Sfâra, Leo. (27.07.2022). Miculescu, one-man show. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9124), 7.

⁶⁹ Scridon, Daniel. (14.10.2022). Rugby-ul, între trecut și prezent! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9180), 11.

⁷⁰ Sfâra, Leo. (13.10.2022). Manchester City, calificată! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9179), 8.

⁷¹ S.L. (12.10.2022). UTA, remiză cu CFR Cluj! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9178), 7. In the same paper there are three more articles with exclamation marks, 2 at page 7: "Victorie în prima etapă a Superligii!" (Victory in the first stage of the Superleague!) and "Liga 6: Turnu pierde, Mândruloc e prima!". (League 6: Turnu lose, Mandruloc is the first!) And at page 8: "Cere României să nu joace!" (Theodor Meleşcanu Ask Romania not to play!)

⁷² Scridon, Daniel. (7.10.2022). Marius Vizer, centură 8 DAN! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9175), 12.

⁷³ S.D. (4.10.2022). Vados Arad, vicecampionă națională la șah! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9172), 7.

⁷⁴ S.D. (4.10.2022). Opt medalii pentru CSM Arad! *Jurnal arădean*, XXXIV, 9172), 7.

⁷⁵ S.L. (10.10.2022). Nebunie totală în Liga a III-a! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9176), 7.

⁷⁶ Sfâra, Leo. (8.02.2023). Atletico Arad a triumfat la Balkan Cup Brașov! *Jurnal arădean*, (9258), 7.

⁷⁷ Sfâra, Leo. 18.10.2023). Sold-out la Tribuna I! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9432), 1, 7.

⁷⁸ S.L. (3.10.2022). Victorii pentru Crișul și Pecica! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXI, 8419), 7. In *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9171), journalist Leo Sfâra uses the same title: "Crișul and Pecica, victories!" and "The Socodor team took over the top of League 4!", at the same page, 7, in the newspaper.

"The first *hat-trick* for Bayern/ English striker Harry Kane managed his first hat-trick in the Bayern Munich jersey, in the game that the German champion won with the score of 7-0 in front of the team VFL Bochum"⁷⁹

Hat-trick (or hat trick) is an anglophone sports term that refers to the achievement of a positive performance three or more times during a game. The term was first used in 1858 in the context of a cricket match. It is most commonly used in football and hockey to describe when a single player scores three goals in a match. Similar feats include scoring two goals in a match (a double), four goals (poker), or five goals (penta-trick).

In conclusion, the interplay of Latin phrases, colloquial expressions, and neologisms enriches the vocabulary of sports language, creating a vibrant and multifaceted communication style. This blend reflects the cultural heritage, immediacy, and ongoing evolution of sports discourse, allowing journalists to connect with readers in diverse and impactful ways. As sports continue to develop and globalize, the language that describes them will undoubtedly continue to adapt, incorporating new terms and expressions while preserving echoes of the past. This linguistic fusion not only enhances the appeal of sports reporting but also mirrors the dynamic spirit of sport itself.

6. Sports Style: Between Technical Jargon and Literary Flair. The Dual Nature of Sports Language.

The language of sports occupies a unique position in the realm of communication, straddling the line between precise technical terminology and vivid literary expression. Unlike other specialized fields, sports discourse not only conveys factual, statistical information but also captures the emotional and dramatic essence of athletic competition. This dual nature of sports style results in a linguistic blend where the rigidity of technical jargon coexists with metaphor, hyperbole, and colloquial speech, reflecting both the specificity of sport as a discipline and the cultural storytelling that surrounds it. Understanding this interplay offers valuable insight into how sports journalism shapes public perception, engages audiences, and continually evolves to balance clarity with creativity.

We may say that the existence of a distinct sports style remains a subject of debate among linguists. Some view it as closely related to technical language, considering it a variant of it (Iordan, 1944, p. 341), while others argue that it stands as an independent style within literary language, constantly evolving and enriching itself (Seche, 1959, pp. 80-98). The sports style thus fluctuates between two extremes: on one hand, it presents strictly technical details, such as game tables and summarized results, while on the other hand, it can delve into lyrical, metaphorical commentary.

"We are dealing with a technical language, with a terminology of specialists, as in any profession: The athlete is a true technician, who, practicing a certain occupation, knows all its secrets and uses the established technical terms. Sports language is related to that of technology and science. But, on the other hand, the language of sports writing has some obvious affinity with the style of advertising and even with the artistic one". (Seche, 1959, p.81)

We speak of a sports style characterized by two extremes: rigidity and evolution, blending the specific terminology of various games with elements of jargon. In sports commentary, there is a noticeable tendency toward eccentricity, a "rhetorical ornament" (Zafiu, 2001). The

⁷⁹ AGERPRES. (25.09.2023). Primul hat-trick pentru Bayern. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9415), 12.

language of sports mirrors a broader trend in local written press: the pursuit of originality, stylistic effects, and the local journalists' persistent desire to demonstrate intelligence and humor. This technical description is often overshadowed by expressive subjectivity. For example, "Grahovac is about to leave UTA!" or "Svendanskas' debut is eagerly anticipated: an interesting young goalkeeper".⁸⁰ The adjective "interesting" has become a cliché that increasingly appears in written press articles. It tends to encompass almost everything the reader might want to know, yet provides nothing specific.

According to Andrews (2006, p. 78), there are situations in which journalists are instructed not to maintain complete neutrality in their reports. For example, when a local team competes against an outside team, the coverage will typically be presented from the perspective of the local team. Additionally, sports news that covers multiple main topics often includes the phrase "in other words" as a transition to a new subject. This frequently used, somewhat disruptive formula could be replaced with a new paragraph (introducing a fresh topic) or by a new story altogether.

Sports journalists face several criticisms, including blurring the lines between opinion and information, relying on rumors and gossip, lacking rigor in their coverage, sensationalism, inequalities in the treatment of gender, race, and disability, and using low-quality sources (Hardin, 2009). In the style of contemporary sports commentary in the Romanian local press, there is a noticeable trend toward metaphorizing language, with figurative terms often being placed in quotation marks: West Petrom "courts" another pivot; Gârbău and his colleagues "attack" Spain. UTA Academy. When you're on a roll, you're on a roll⁸¹; They took 59 medals out of the water⁸².

Sports journalists often use metaphors in a way similar to writers who aim to transport readers into a fictional universe. For example, "the medals are conquered on the sand of hope." Hope and sand are unusual associations in the context of contemporary sports language⁸³. Other time, the journalist is inspired by a wellknown writer and takes the title of a famous novel written by Radu Tudoran, *All the sails up*, and adapts it for sports language: "The football team UTA with «all the sails up»".⁸⁴ Handball players are "in green" or they are *up* now but later can be *down*⁸⁵.

Another commonly used expression is "to smoke the peace pipe." This phrase is used by journalists to indicate that two entities have reconciled: "UTA and Recons smoke peace pipe, peacefully"⁸⁶. The football team from Arad is metaphorically called "the old lady" who must be saved, like the princesses from the old stories: "He came to save the Old Lady"⁸⁷.

A noticeable tendency is the omission of the predicate, often replaced by a comma. For example, in the title "Popovici, over Djokovic!"⁸⁸ the journalist seems to enjoy the rhyme, even

⁸⁰ Unsign article. (10.11.2017). Grahovac, ca și plecat de la UTA! E așteptat debutul lui Svendanskas: Un portar tânăr, interesant. *Glasul aradului*, (2781), 11.

⁸¹ Sfâra, Leo. (27.09.2022). Academia UTA este pe val. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9167), 1, 7.

⁸² Scridon, Daniel. (19.10.2023). Au scos 59 de medalii din apă. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9433), 7. This title is about the swimmers from CS Arad who won the team cup, in Oroshaza, Hungary. So no one saved anything from the water. But swimmers won 59 medals by swimming in the Hungarian pool.

⁸³ A.V. (27.07.2021). Medalii pe nisipul speranței. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIII, 8870), 7.

⁸⁴ Sfâra, Leo. (25.04.2022). UTA, cu toate pânzele sus. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9244), 7.

⁸⁵ AGERPRES. (3.10.2023). Hanbalistele sunt pe plus! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9421), 8.

⁸⁶ Scridon, Daniel. (14.07.2021). UTA și Recons au fumat pipa păcii. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIII, 8862), 7.

⁸⁷ Sfâra, Leo. (26.04.2023). A venit să salveze Bătrâna Doamnă. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9311), 1, 7. The news is about a new coach for UTA football team, Mircea Rednic. He is the new prince that will save the lady.

⁸⁸ AGERPRES. (29.12.2022). Popovici, peste Djokovic! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9231), 8.

though the two athletes do not compete in the same sport. The article discusses Romanian swimmer David Popovici, who was named the best athlete of 2022 in the Balkans.

At the local football club in Arad, coach Poenaru is changing the "sheet" and will only use players who are committed to the club: "«The Revolution» begins at UTA!"⁸⁹ The metaphorical models favored by sports journalists often draw from areas such as war (fight, attack, villains, heroes), art (stage, scene, protagonists, actor, director), technical or mechanical fields (engines, motor, locomotive, plugs, piston, pedals, propeller), or even the animal kingdom, as seen in the phrase: "Kylian Mbappe is a real beast on the field"⁹⁰.

The sports chronicle blends colloquial style with English words, such as "out" or "lady." For example: "For you, lady UTA!" where UTA is the local football team from Arad. Another example: "Sferlea, out at the European Junior Championships".⁹¹ A trend observed in Romanian written press is the frequent use of ellipses. These allow room for the reader to interpret and add their own thoughts to the text, as seen in: "He's thinking about... the podium."⁹²

Bohler⁹³ discusses an effect known as affirmative bias. When we encounter a headline in a newspaper presented in an interrogative form, there is a strong likelihood that it will eventually shape our perception of reality in the hours and days that follow. The reader tends to transform questions into statements, especially when the meaning is easily understood (Neamțu, 2022).

"Keseru can no longer play at UTA!?"⁹⁴ or "The application «UTA fan», a big goose egg?"⁹⁵ - the interrogations remain statements in the minds and memory of readers. "Is Arad ashamed?"⁹⁶ Reading this question, the public remains with the idea that Arad city will be the mockery of the fans because the turf of the arena where the football match will take place is soaked with water and in the week-end meteorologists announce rainy weather. So there is no doubt, a question becomes a certainty in the reader's mind.

The question mark at the end of a headline often appears when the journalist is not entirely certain about the information:

"End point in the «Roger case»?"⁹⁷

"Is Ovidiu Hațegan back in the grass?"⁹⁸

In contrast to the question mark, which reflects the journalist's uncertainty about a situation, the exclamation mark signals a definitive statement that the journalist feels compelled to emphasize. For instance, when the journalist writes, "The team from Arad lost clearly," it implies a certain degree of finality - whether by a large margin or not, the result is still a loss. On the other hand, "The UTA team defeated Sepsi!"⁹⁹ conveys a certainty and triumph, underscoring the event with definitive emphasis. Sports journalists often indulge in chain metaphors, blending various fields and creating what can sometimes be seen as excessive allegorical expressions.

⁸⁹ Sfâra, Leo. (10.10.2022). Începe revoluția la UTA. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9176), 7.

⁹⁰ Unsign article. (27.09.2022). Kylian este o adevărată bestie pe teren. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9167), 8.

⁹¹ A.V. (15.07.2022). Sferlea, out la dublu la CE de juniori. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9116), 9.

⁹² Unsign article. (30.06.2022). Mihai Dobreascu se gândește la Podium. *Glasul aradului*, (3930), 12.

⁹³ 150 petites expériences de psychologie des médias pour mieux comprendre comment ou vous manipule, Paris: Dunod, 2008. The book was translated, a year later, in Romanian, at the publishing house "Polirom", Iasi. The affirmative bias is explained, in the Romanian edition, on pages 97-100.

⁹⁴ Sfâra, Leo. (11.10.2022). Keșeru nu mai poate juca la UTA!? *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9177), 7.

⁹⁵ Sfâra, Leo. (11.10.2022). Aplicația UTA FAN, un mare fâș? *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9177), 7.

⁹⁶ Sfâra, Leo. (4.12.2022). Se va face Aradul de râș? *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9222), 7.

⁹⁷ Sfâra, Leo. (3.10.2022). Punct final în cazul Roger? *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9171), 7.

⁹⁸ S.D. (2.11.2022). Se întoarce Ovidiu Hațegan în iarbă? *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9193), 7.

⁹⁹ Sfâra, Leo. (5.12.2022). UTA, înfrângere cu Sepsi! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9214), 7.

“A young journalist, writes Romanian analyst Ioan Chirila, generally wants to climb the steps of the sports chronicle. Perhaps this trend is specific not only to the sports journalists, but to the newspaper in general. And then, most of the time, they turn to the the field of pseudo-literature , seeking to ornate their chronicle. He relies primarily on some metaphorical achievements. The gesture might look innocent. In the end, however, this style manages to suffocate the subject, so that the main goal – awakening the interest in sport – falls on the second plane” (Chirilă, 1973, p.29).

In this example, the title "Bla, bla, bla...!" by journalist Petre Don, published in *Observer* (no. 2162), conveys a sense of excessive, repetitive talk - indicating that the words or reactions to a specific event are overflowing and perhaps lacking substance. The phrase "Bla bla bla..." suggests the abundance of words without much impact, inviting the reader to interpret the significance themselves. A peculiar trend in Romanian sports writing is the frequent use of quotation marks and figurative language, such as in the headline "Team UTA must 'wake up'!"¹⁰⁰ The use of quotation marks here adds an extra layer of emphasis or irony, which is common in sports journalism, where figurative language often replaces literal expression to engage the reader's imagination.¹⁰¹ The exclamation point could be justified in a title like a 4000-euro match, and that's only because of the amount of money, which is a huge one for the Romanian public.

As demonstrated in our analysis, titles with exclamation marks have become so frequent that they lose their impact, turning the exclamation mark into an almost redundant punctuation mark. It appears in headlines as regularly as the period at the end of a sentence. Out of five articles on the sports page, it's common to find at least three or four titles using an exclamation mark. This overuse dilutes the effect it's meant to have, making it less about conveying excitement or emphasis and more of a predictable, almost mechanical, punctuation choice.

The headline "Socodor Sports Club detonates the «bomb»"¹⁰² is an example of how sports journalists play with figurative language to create intrigue. While the word "bomb" usually refers to something dangerous or explosive, here it is used metaphorically to signify a major surprise or unexpected event the club is preparing for its fans. The quotation marks around "bomb" emphasize that the word is not meant to be taken literally, signaling to the reader that the term has a figurative, attention-grabbing meaning, rather than a real-world implication. This technique adds a layer of suspense or drama to the story, typical of how sports journalists engage their audience."

The headline "The Moroccans detonated the «bomb»"¹⁰³ is another example of figurative language used in sports journalism. Here, the word "bomb" is not referring to any dangerous or violent event, but rather to a surprising and game-changing achievement: Morocco's unexpected victory over Belgium in the World Championship in Qatar. By using the term "detonated," the journalist conveys the shock and impact of the victory, creating a dramatic, attention-grabbing narrative. In sports reporting, such spiritual or plastic formulas are common. These formulas are designed to evoke strong imagery or emotions in the reader. They serve to make the story more engaging, by transforming an ordinary event into something extraordinary and exciting. Here are some examples of the types of figurative language or expressions typically found in sports writing: metaphors, hyperbole, personification, clichés. These expressions help to make sports journalism more dynamic, but they must be used carefully to avoid over-dramatization.

¹⁰⁰ Scridon, Daniel. (13.09.2022). Meci de 4.000 de euro! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9157), 7.

¹⁰¹ Sfăra, Leo. (20.09.2022). UTA trebuie să se trezească. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9162), 1.

¹⁰² Sfăra, Leo. (18.08.2023). C.S. Socodor detonează bomba. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9395), 7.

¹⁰³ Scridon, Daniel. (29.11.2022). Marocanii au detonat bomba. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9212), 8

They are an important aspect of the sports style, combining the technical and emotional aspects of storytelling.

Here are some examples of spiritual, plastic formulas encountered in sports journalism:

sending the ball back home instead of *hand it over to his own goalkeeper*;

sending the ball into the cosmos - *sending the ball much higher than the target*.

Here's Keseru, this general with the blood of a king who didn't allow his lieutenants to play offside.

On the right flank, it comes hard from the back.

Popa runs the Arad' Ariegard.

The goalkeeper of the team absorbs the balls and catapults them, extraordinary, extraordinary....

Like a veritable piston, Keseru attacks.

There is a big, very big match in town Chișineu Criș¹⁰⁴

"Silver for 'Mr. ippon' at the National Senior Championships"¹⁰⁵ What's unusual about this title is the use of the expression "Mr. Ippon," but with the word "ippon" written in lowercase. In this case, "ippon" is used as a metaphor for the athlete Luca Kunszabo, who, at 26 years old, has won many judo matches using the ippon technique. For those unfamiliar with the term, ippon refers to the highest score a fighter can achieve in Japanese martial arts competitions, such as judo, kendo, or jujitsu. The issue with the title lies in the lowercase "ippon," which diminishes its significance. Since "Ippon" refers to a specific term in judo and is being used as a metaphor for the athlete, it should be capitalized to reflect both its literal meaning and metaphorical usage. The proper version should read: "Silver for Mr. Ippon at the National Senior Championships." This would provide clarity and respect for the nickname while keeping the meaning intact. It also ensures consistency in the use of capitalization, just as you would capitalize other titles or nicknames.

We observed an increase in the use of colloquial language in local newspapers, driven by journalists' desire to connect with readers on a more personal level. Informal expressions, including slang, have become more common in the press as the roughness of the language is thought to attract attention. (Neamțu, 2022) Journalists often rely on metaphors, enclosed in quotation marks, and frequently use adjectives like "interesting" or its opposite: "without salt and pepper," meaning dull or uninteresting.

Match without "salt and pepper".

The UTA team came home with a point from the match against the University team after a game on a very difficult pitch. The match started quite "alive", with the two teams preoccupied with scoring as quickly as possible¹⁰⁶.

Lipova and Crișul teams are out to "smack" us again!¹⁰⁷ This does not mean that the fans of the teams will fight in the public square. The journalist wants to say that these two football teams once again amaze us with their performances.

"The Chișineu-Criș team throws the towel"¹⁰⁸ writes the journalist. The article is not about a bath towel used by the football team. The journalist uses a colloquial expression, from the familiar language, meaning that the team is in a financial difficulty. And that it is possible

¹⁰⁴ Sfăra, Leo. (2.12.2022). Mare meci, mare, la Chișineu Criș. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9213), 11.

¹⁰⁵ Scridon, Daniel. (28.03.2023). Argint pentru Mister ippon. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9292), 7.

¹⁰⁶ Sfăra, Leo. (12.12.2022). Remiză fără sare și piper. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9219), 7.

¹⁰⁷ Sfăra, Leo. (28.11.2022). Lipova și Crișul «lovesc» din nou! *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXIV, 9211), 7.

¹⁰⁸ Scridon, Daniel. (14.08.2023). Crișul Chișineu Criș aruncă prosopul. *Jurnal arădean*, (XXXV, 9386), 9.

to vanished, with no funds to survive. So *throwing in the towel* means for the sports journalist - *being surprised by a situation that proves unfavorable* for the team in question.

We may conclude that the sports style is a dynamic and multifaceted form of communication that reflects the complexities of athletic endeavors and their cultural significance. It challenges traditional boundaries by merging the precise language of specialists with the imaginative flair of literary devices, creating a space where technical accuracy and expressive storytelling enrich each other. While this blending enhances the appeal of sports journalism, it also presents risks, overuse of clichés, metaphorical excess, and blurred lines between fact and opinion can dilute the message and confuse readers. Nonetheless, the continual evolution of sports language underscores its vitality and its capacity to captivate diverse audiences, making it a compelling subject for linguistic and cultural study alike.

7. Final Reflections on Sports Journalism Style in Regional Romanian Press. Conclusions.

This study focuses on two regional Romanian newspapers, *Jurnal arădean* and *Glasul Aradului*, chosen because their sports sections remain vital to sustaining the print editions amidst the broader challenges facing written press. Both papers also publish online, often featuring the same articles, providing a comprehensive view of current sports journalism practices.

While this research centers on two regional Romanian newspapers, the insights gained about the stylistic characteristics of sports journalism could also offer valuable perspectives for analyzing sports reporting in other linguistic and cultural settings.

By focusing on regional Romanian newspapers, we believe that our study fills an important gap by providing a localized perspective that complements these broader theoretical frameworks. It offers a valuable case study showing how universal tendencies in sports reporting, such as the use of metaphor, exaggeration, and emotional language, manifest within the specific cultural and linguistic context of Romania. This not only enriches the global understanding of sports journalism styles but also invites foreign researchers to consider the diversity and particularities of regional media environments. Future studies could benefit from comparative research that bridges local investigations like ours with international analyses to build a more nuanced, cross-cultural view of sports language and media practices.

The editorial style of sports articles can be categorized within the broader journalistic style. As such, the press must adopt a direct, clear, and simple approach to ensure the reader can easily understand the content. The style should engage the reader, turning them into an indirect witness to the events reported by the journalist. In sports writing, clarity is essential. It becomes the most important quality of journalistic writing today, and sports language strives to reflect this. As Harari (2018) aptly states, "In a world flooded with irrelevant information, clarity is the power."

One striking observation is the near-ubiquitous use of exclamation marks in headlines, reflecting an obsession with dramatization and emotional emphasis. This punctuation trend, coupled with a penchant for linguistic eccentricity and ornamental rhetoric, often shifts focus away from the objective reporting of facts toward a more subjective and expressive commentary. This dynamic creates a tension between the technical precision of sports terminology and the creative flourish of journalistic storytelling.

Furthermore, sports language in the local press mirrors a wider journalistic trend that values originality and stylistic impact, with journalists frequently employing metaphors, humor, and colloquialisms to engage readers. As noted by researcher G. Gruică (2011), the

pervasiveness of sports metaphors extends beyond sports reporting into everyday public discourse, including political commentary. This linguistic cross-pollination underscores how sports language serves as a versatile and evocative tool for interpreting social and political realities.

The tendency toward simplification and informality in regional sports journalism is evident in the growing use of colloquialisms, ellipses, and chain metaphors, which contribute to a more conversational tone but also risk vulgarity and oversimplification. This trend may enhance reader accessibility but also raises questions about the balance between entertainment and journalistic rigor.

The interplay between local identity and sports language is significant. Regional newspapers often adopt a tone that champions local teams and athletes, reflecting community pride but potentially compromising journalistic neutrality. This regional bias impacts how stories are framed and which narratives are amplified.

The frequent use of figurative language, particularly metaphors drawn from war, art, and mechanics, reveals how sports discourse creatively borrows from diverse semantic fields to heighten drama and captivate readers. However, excessive metaphorical usage can dilute the clarity and factual content essential to informative journalism.

Digital transformation also influences sports journalism style. The pressure to attract online clicks and social media shares may encourage more sensational and expressive language, emphasizing emotional appeal over balanced reporting.

Finally, the evolving sports style in Romanian regional press exemplifies a broader shift in journalism, where the boundary between information and entertainment blurs, posing both opportunities and challenges for the future of sports reporting.

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