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A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF FOOTBALL NEWS:

A CASE STUDY OF *THE NATION*

A MASTER'S PROJECT
BY
NISARAWAN CHIENWICHAI

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Master of Arts Degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University
October 2006
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A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF FOOTBALL NEWS:

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AN ABSTRACT

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Nisarawn Chienwichai. (2006). *A stylistic analysis of football news: A case study of The Nation*. A Master's Project, M.A. (English). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University, Advisor Committee: Assistant Professor Dr. Tipa Thep-Ackrapong, Dr. Nitaya Suksaeresup, and Mr. Peter Fayers.

This study addressed three objectives regarding language style in football news. It firstly investigated the most frequent theme in football news collected from *The Nation*, a newspaper in Thailand. Secondly it explored the types of linguistic features of football news which appeared in the data. Finally, it investigated the frequency of the football news features. A corpus of 240 pieces of football news comprising 120,069 word tokens collected from *The Nation* between July 1 and December 31, 2005 was analyzed. The results of the study revealed that the most favorite themes found in football news were the off-the-field story (65.42 %), the game story (30.83 %) and the pre-game story (3.75 %) respectively. The findings in football news characteristic features revealed that there were six characteristic features employed in the football news data. In terms of frequency of occurrence, football technical terms were mostly found (59.76%), followed by short words (15.62%), abbreviations (10.49%), statistics (10.16%), alias (3.24%), and wordplay (0.73%) respectively.

การวิเคราะห์ลีลาการใช้ภาษาในข่าวฟุตบอล: กรณีศึกษาของหนังสือพิมพ์เดอะเนชั่น

บทคัดย่อ
ของ
นิศราวรรณ เขียววิชัย

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ
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งานนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาลีลาการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในข่าวฟุตบอล 3 หัวข้อ ได้แก่ ความถี่ของประเด็นข่าวฟุตบอล ลักษณะเฉพาะของข่าวฟุตบอล และความถี่ของลักษณะเฉพาะในข่าวฟุตบอลจากหนังสือพิมพ์เดอะเนชั่น กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการศึกษาได้ถูกรวบรวมจากหนังสือพิมพ์เดอะเนชั่น โดยการสุ่มตัวอย่างจากข่าวฟุตบอลจำนวน 240 ข่าว ระหว่างวันที่ 1 กรกฎาคม ถึง 1 ธันวาคม 2548 มีจำนวนคำทั้งสิ้น 120,069 คำ ผลของการศึกษาพบว่าประเด็นข่าวที่พบในกลุ่มตัวอย่างมากที่สุดได้แก่ประเด็นข่าวทั่วไป คิดเป็น 65.42 เปอร์เซ็นต์, ประเด็นข่าวรายงานผลการแข่งขันคิดเป็น 30.83 เปอร์เซ็นต์ และประเด็นข่าวก่อนการแข่งขัน คิดเป็น 3.7 เปอร์เซ็นต์ ตามลำดับ นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่าลักษณะเฉพาะของการเขียนข่าวฟุตบอลอยู่ 6 ลักษณะด้วยกันเรียงตามความถี่ที่พบในกลุ่มตัวอย่าง ดังนี้ ศัพท์เฉพาะในกีฬาฟุตบอล คิดเป็น 59.76 เปอร์เซ็นต์, คำย่อ คิดเป็น 15.62 เปอร์เซ็นต์, อักษรย่อ คิดเป็น 10.49 เปอร์เซ็นต์, สถิติ 10.16 เปอร์เซ็นต์, ฉายา คิดเป็น 3.24 เปอร์เซ็นต์ และสำนวนข่าว 0.73 เปอร์เซ็นต์ ตามลำดับ

The Master's Project Committee and Oral Defense Committee have approved this Master's Project as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University.

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October *12*, 2006

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

In the era of globalization, major events that happen everyday around the world are immediately reported through mass media. Therefore, Thai people easily learn about the news that happens in America or Europe through the media. Among different types of media, newspapers are considered “archetypal” an original model or type after which other similar things are patterned (Hodgson, 1993:4).

According to Manilerd (1998: 230), Thai newspapers have developed into one of the biggest media of modern times. There are 20 daily newspapers, two of which are in English. One of them *The Nation* is considered a creditable and dependable source for national and international news. It is issued seven days a week providing readers with news on social, economic, politic, educational issues as well as advertisements, and sports. The target readers of *The Nation* are business people, high executives, students, and foreigners residing in Thailand. Its styles and contents are similar to those of quality English newspapers in other countries.

As newspapers have obviously played a crucial role in society, they are collected, compiled, and studied. News writing especially linguistic features has been studied widely. For example, Charuchinda (2003) analyzed the use of noun phrases in the *Bangkok Post*'s front-page headlines. Phanphanich (1999) studied English usage in

political news. Thanomsak (1998) investigated the language form of front page news in *The Nation* and *Bangkok Post*.

Of all reported news, sports news is one of the sub-genres of “journalese” stereotypical style associated with general newspaper writing (Livesey, 1998: 106). Sports news is the most read section after the local news; many people buy the morning newspaper to find out what happened in sports matches of the previous night (Mencher, 2000: 56). The readers want to read about the games and to savor the important plays again, despite having seen them before. All sports fans need to read sports stories to reflect the tension, excitement, and joy or sorrow of the match.

Among kinds of sports news, football news seems to be the most famous. The Associated Press assigns 100 writers to cover each match, and these writers send out more than 150,000 words plus statistics a day for publishing. However, only scant attention has been paid to analyses of the language style or genre of football news. Because of many interesting and unique features of sports news, the researcher was motivated to analyze the football news covering its themes and unique features. The results of the study can help Thai readers to read English football news more efficiently; moreover, they can be used as guidelines for sports columnists and student writers to practice their sports news writing.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine football news in *The Nation* from July 1 to December 31, 2005. In other words, it aimed at studying the following:

1. To investigate the most frequent themes in football news.
2. To analyze the types of linguistic features of football news.
3. To investigate the frequency of football news features.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study will be useful as follows:

1. They can reveal football news characteristics to generate comprehension of football news writing and reading for others.
2. They can be used as guidelines for further studies in language styles and other linguistic concerns such as a comparison of football language style in Thai local newspapers and those in international newspapers.
3. They can be considered a model writing for amateur football columnists and student writers to practice and improve their writing.

Scope of the Study

The study focused on the analysis of language style in respect of themes and linguistic features used in *The Nation*. The samples of the study were 240 pieces of football news containing 120,069 word tokens in *The Nation* randomly collected from July 1 to December 31, 2005.

Definition of Terms

The key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Style

Style is defined as the product of writers' conscious and unconscious selection of the topic, organization, diction, vocabulary, syntax, and imagery based on their premise to communicate emotions and ideas in written and spoken forms (McEdward, 1968: 15).

2. Word count

Word counts refer to every word form that occurs in the text. Individual words occurring in a text are counted each time they are used. In this study, samples were 240 pieces of football news from *The Nation* comprising 120,069 word counts.

3. Word token

Word tokens refer to every word form of each football news characteristic feature that occurs in the news text. Each word occurring in a text is counted each time it is used. In this study, there were 11,658 word tokens from all features.

Overview of the Study

In short, this study aimed to analyze the language style in football news in respect of football news themes and its characteristic feature. Chapter 2, reviews the literature of genre analysis, sports news themes and characteristic features in sports news. Chapter 3 presents data collection, procedures, and data analysis. It deals with the description of the method used in selecting the data and describes the procedure employed to analyze the data. Chapter 4 offers the results of the study. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes the results

of the analysis and discusses the pedagogical implication of the findings and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the related literature is reviewed focusing on genre analysis. Furthermore, sports news themes and its characteristic features are reviewed to establish the background knowledge in this study.

1. Genre analysis

Swales (1990: 58) defines genre as a class of social or communicative events characterized by sets of specific communicative purposes. The sets are identified by the specialists of the discourse community. He also considers a genre as consisting of a set of moves. A move is a part of a text that can be both written and spoken. Swales (1990) claims that there is a relationship between the purpose accomplished by the genre and the schematic structure of the genre, the text and language employed.

Bhatia (1993: 4) points out that genre analysis is very significant since it makes more explicit the explanation of academic and professional texts. He focuses on discourse within the academic community and on the genre characteristics, conventions and constraints that are recognized and understood by its professional members.

Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) deepen genre analysis in similar research areas. Swales' framework is based mostly on academic settings or research-process genres, while Bhatia's approach is on both academic and other professional texts. According to Livesey's

(1998) research, the framework covers non-academic texts such as advertising, journalese, and literary texts.

Livesey (1998: 106) analyzes many genres of English styles. His study also covers journalese of various styles; he uses the term *journalese* in order to embrace every style of writing that appears in a newspaper. He explains that the journalese consists of different sections with distinctive features of language style. For example, business news writers use business writing styles; those are jargon, standard business abbreviation as well as French and Latin terms. Livesey's language style analysis shows characteristic features of journalese in two main parts: headline and body.

The features of journalese headline are abbreviations, metonyms, short words, and wordplay as well as figures of speech. Besides the headline features, the body of the text features are layout, attribution, lead paragraph, cliché, premodification of noun, article omission, leading the way with new words, excessive detail, change of referring expression, and readability.

In other words, genres are families or categories of discourse that share certain purposes and characteristics. The characteristic is a matter of form, procedure or content those confer regularity on the way the message is presented, and are sufficiently prominent to give the discourse a clear identity.

3. Sports news themes

There are two ways to classify sports news themes. The first one is pre-game story, game story and off-the field story (Itule & Anderson, 2000: 324-335). The other classification is pre-game theme, game theme, and post-game theme (Ferguson, 1993: 199). However, the post-game story seems to be the same theme as the off-the-field story because they are alike in many foci such as interviews of the players after the game, contract negotiations and personal lives.

The following explains each sports news theme:

3.1 Pre-game story

Pre-game story gives information of each football team before the next match.

The pre-game story can be divided into football preview and the war of words.

3.1.1 Football preview

Football preview informs the readers of the time of each match broadcast on the television, team ranking as well as player condition. An example of the football preview is:

All matches start at 2:45am Bangkok time, unless stated...

Man City (8) V Chelsea (1)

Defender Richard Dunne could earn a recall to Manchester City's starting line-up after the 4-3 Wigan defeat. And Andy Cole, who scored a late goal to Stuart Pearce's side in that game, is another tipped to start the match. Chelsea midfielder Michael Essien will miss today's trip to Manchester because of a heel injury. Defender Ricardo Carvalho (Achilles) is also on the sidelines, while Damien Duff (also Achilles) and Asier Del Horno (leg) could return.

(Premiership, 2005: 13B)

This is an example of the football preview consisting of the broadcasting time on TV of each match, team ranking as well as team and player condition. It shows the match between Manchester City and Chelsea would start at 2:45 am. Moreover, it presents each team ranking; Chelsea is ranked the first while Manchester City is ranked the eighth in Premier League. This football preview informs us that Richard Dunne, the Manchester City defender, could earn a recall to the team. Michael Essien and Ricardo Carvalho in Chelsea could be on the sidelines because of their injuries, while Damien Duff and Asier Del Horno could return for the match.

3.1.2 The war of words

The war of words is the psychological warfare between the players or managers of each football team who give pressure to the rival team. An example of a war of words is:

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez insisted his side can become the first this season to halt Chelsea's Premiership... "The positive things are that we have one more Champion League point and we were better than Chelsea. We have a better squad than last season and we could have beaten them," said Benitez.

(Rafa Sure of Derailing the Blues, 2005: 10B)

This example shows the war of words of the Liverpool manager, Rafael Benitez, who is confident that his team will be the winner; he unleashed a verbal attack on Jose Mourinho, the Chelsea manager.

3.2 Game story

Game story explores information of each football team after finishing a football match. Almost all of the post-game news contains three internal moves as follows:

Move 1: Indicating the score report and goal scorer

Move 2: Reporting the comment on playing style as well as the managers' and players' attitude

Move 3: Describing the match report

An example of a game story is as follows:

Brazil Break Home Hearts to Reach Final

Nuremberg, Germany – Brazil marksman Adriano turned in a scintillation two- goal display to send the five-time World Cup winners into the final of the Confederations Cup with a 3-2 win over hosts Germany here on Saturday.

The Inter Milan striker set up all of Brazil's goals, winning a penalty for Ronaldinho to convert, and scoring two himself after Germany had twice equalized through Lukas Podolski and a Michael Ballack penalty.

Move 1

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira paid tribute to his players' resistance against a German side which gave its all. "My players were tired, but this was a mental game far more than a technical game," Parreira said. "They showed a lot of confidence and a lot of courage and that is why I am proud of my team.

"It is not easy to beat Germany here, on their home ground, in what was a World Cup final for them."

Move 2

With the match just seven minutes old, an overenthusiastic male fan ran on to the pitch waving a black and white flag...

Both sides looked dangerous from set pieces and it was the source of the first goal.

Move 3

In the 21st minute Adriano let rip with a ferocious 35 yard free-kick with his trusty left foot and with a slight deflection off the wall ...

(Brazil Break Home Hearts to Reach Final, 2005: 13B)

This example presents the game story; it describes the match between Brazil and Germany in a three-move model. The score report and goal scorer are stated in the first move, followed by the manager's attitudes in the second move, and the match report in the third move respectively.

3.3 Off-the-field story

The off-the field story informs the readers of the football teams or football players beyond the game. The readers are informed of the transfer of football players, the wages and contract offering, etc.

An example of an off-the-field is "Liverpool Football Club on Tuesday turned down Chelsea's \$56 million bid for their captain Steven Gerrard" (A Stevie Blunder, 2005: 14B).

This example is classified as an off-the-field story because it informs the readers of the contract offering. Chelsea offers \$56 million bid for Liverpool's Captain Steven Gerrard, but Liverpool refused the offer.

4. Sport news characteristic features

Some news writing styles proposed by Livesey (1998: 106-126) are used in sport news; those are word play in headlines, abbreviation use, and heavy use of short words. Moreover, some features found in sports news proposed by Leiter, Harriss and Johnson (2000: 449-462) as well as Mencher (2000: 530-566) are statistical information, alias, and football technical terms. Each feature is presented as follows:

4.1 Statistics

Statistics are useful to enhance the readers' news comprehension. The following example shows the ranking of football teams: Chelsea, Manchester United, Liverpool, and Tottenham Hotspurs respectfully. It presents that Chelsea, receiving the highest point, 43, is ranked the highest, while Tottenham, with 30 points, is the lowest.

STANDINGS							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Chelsea	16	14	1	1	35	7	43
Man United	16	10	4	2	29	14	34
Liverpool	15	9	4	2	20	8	31
Tottenham	16	8	6	2	22	13	30

(United They Rise, 2005: 11B)

4.2 Abbreviations

Full well-known terms hardly ever appear in football news. Most terms are used in abbreviation in sports news. For example:

P	Played Games
W	Won
D	Drawn
L	Lost
GF	Goals For
GA	Goals Against
PTS	Points
FA	Football Association
FIFA	Federation International of Football Association
ref.	Referee
QPR	Queens Park Rangers
PSG	Paris Saint Germain
Man Utd.	Manchester United
N. Ireland	Northern Ireland
Aust.	Australia

(England football online, 2005)

4.3 Alias

In football news, the reader will usually find the use of alias – words by which a person is called at other times or in other places. For example:

Gunners	Arsenal Football club
Kop / Red	Liverpool Football club
Hammers	West Ham United Football club
The Trotters	Bolton Wonderer Football club
Blues	Chelsea Football club
Red Devil	Manchester United Football club
Black Cat	Sunderland Football club
Red Machine	Liverpool Football club
Socceroos	Australian National Football Team
Flying Eagles	Nigeria National Football Team
The Cannibal	Khalid Boulahrouz, a Dutch footballer
The Wall	Walter Samuel, an Argentinean footballer
The Beast	Julio Baptista, a Brazilian footballer
The Trunk	Gennero Gustuso, an Italian footballer
The Baby Face Killer	Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, a Norwegian footballer

(England football online, 2005)

4.4 Short Words

Short words are usually used in football news headlines in order to save space on each page. For example:

United	Manchester United
City	Manchester City
Spurs	Tottenham Hotspurs
Juve	Juventus
Real	Real Madrid
Bayern	Bayern Munich
Premier	Premier League
West Ham	West Ham United
Barca	Barcelona Football Club
Villa	Aston Villa
Grimsby	Grimsby Town
Lyon	Olympique Lyon
Blackburn	Blackburn Rovers
Newcastle	Newcastle United
Betis	Real Betis

(England football online, 2005)

4.5 Wordplay

Using word play or puns in football news headlines makes the news more interesting.

For example:

The headline -- REAL PAIN IN SPAIN (2005: 10B) -- is clearly an example based on a rhyme and assonance -- “the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds, especially in stress syllables, with changes in the intervening consonants” (the American heritage dictionary of the English language, 1992: 112) – between the words PAIN and SPAIN. Moreover, REAL in this case is not an adjective which means actual, but it is a short word that stands for Real Madrid, a Spanish football team. This news tells the readers about the defeat of Real Madrid football match in Spain.

4.6 Technical Terms

Football technical terms are often found in both headlines and the body of the news. For example:

Nil	Zero
Corner kick	A restart of the game where the ball is kicked from one of the four corners of the field
Free kick	A kick given to a player for a foul by the opposition; the player kicks the ball without any opposing players within ten feet of him
Hooligan	A violent troublemaker fan

Injury time	Time added to the end of the first or second half to compensate for time lost because of player injuries
Kick off	The start of a game, or restart after a goal, when a player kicks the ball forwards
Penalty kick	A kick from the penalty spot by a player against the opposing goal keeper; awarded for the most serious violations of the rule or used in the event of a draw
Yellow card	A small card, yellow in color, that the referee holds up to warn a player for bad behavior
Red card	A small card, red in color, that the referee holds up to make a player leave the game for very bad behavior
Hat trick	A score used when one player gets three goals in the same Match

(England football online, 2005)

In conclusion, this chapter has presented literature related to genre analysis proposed by Swales (1990), Bhatia (1993), and Livesey (1998). Moreover, the research on sports news writing style explaining themes and characteristic features proposed by Furguson's (1993), Itule and Anderson's (2000), Leiter, Harriss and Johnson's (2000), as well as Mencher (2000) are discussed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes data collection, procedures, and data analysis used in the study.

1. Data Collection

The data of this study were collected from *The Nation* between July 1 and December 31, 2005. The study aimed to focus on football news language style only. Therefore, from the total number of collected football news stories, 10 pieces of football news for each week were randomly collected. Altogether 240 pieces of football news containing 120,069 word tokens were selected as data to form a corpus employed in the process of analysis.

2. Procedures

A quantitative-qualitative approach based on genre analysis and language style was involved in the method of the study and analysis. The procedures of the study were divided into four steps:

1. The selected football news was categorized into different themes whether they were pre-game story, game-story, or off-the-field story.

2. The frequency count of each theme was calculated in percentage.
3. The selected football news was analyzed into different types of linguistic features.
4. The frequency count of each feature of the football news under investigation was calculated in percentage.

3. Data Analysis

The findings of the study were shown and discussed with illustrations.

1. The frequency of occurrences of each football theme was calculated and presented in percentage using the following formula:

$$\text{The percentage of each football theme} = \frac{\text{Total number of each theme} \times 100}{240}$$

2. The frequency of occurrences of each football news feature was calculated and presented in percentage using the following formula:

$$\text{The percentage of each football news feature} = \frac{\text{Total word tokens of each feature} \times 100}{\text{Total word tokens in all features}}$$

In short, this chapter presents the data collection, the procedures employed in the study, covering the four steps of the data analysis, statistical analysis together with the description of data presentation briefly.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter explores the results of the study in response to the research objectives: to investigate the most frequent themes in football news, to analyze the linguistic features of football news descriptively, and to investigate the most frequent football news characteristic features.

The findings are presented in tabular form and discussed in two sections: the frequency of football news themes and the frequency of football news features.

Section 1 presents the frequency of occurrence of football news theme in order to explore the first research objective. The findings are tabulated in Table 1 and some plausible explanations are provided.

Table 1. The Frequency of Occurrences of Football News Themes

Football News Themes	Frequency	Percent
	of Occurrence	
Off-the-field story	157	65.42
Game story	74	30.83
Pre-game story	9	3.75
Total	240	100%

Table 1 shows the most favorite themes found in the football news data. The off-the-field theme accounted for 65.42 % (157 out of 240), the game theme for 30.83 % (74 out of 240), and the pre-game theme for 3.75 % (9 out of 240) respectively.

A plausible explanation for the frequent use of the off-the-field story, game story, and pre-game story as the main theme respectively was probably due to the interest in match reports of football fans. Although they needed to read the match report in the game story, most were more interested in their favorite club and player. Therefore, the off-the-field theme seemed to be the most favorite theme in the football news data.

In order to investigate the second and the third research objectives, section 2 illustrates types of football news characteristic features and their frequency of occurrences. For conducting each feature percentage, every word form that occurred in the data was counted each time it was used; there were altogether 120,069 word counts from the data. Then, each feature of football news was counted in order to conduct the percentage of occurrence; the total number of football news characteristic features was 11, 658 word tokens. Therefore, the coverage of occurrences in football news features accounted for 9.71% of word tokens (11, 658 out of 120,069).

There are seven tables reporting all findings of football news characteristic features. Table 2 shows the coverage of football news features in word tokens; moreover, each football news feature occurrence together with examples is shown in Tables 3-8. Plausible explanations are discussed under each table.

Table 2. The Coverage of Football News Features in Word Tokens

Football News Features	Frequency	
	of	Percent
	Occurrence	
1. Football technical terms	6,967	59.76
2. Short words	1,821	15.62
3. Abbreviations	1,223	10.49
4. Statistics	1,184	10.16
5. Alias	378	3.24
6. Wordplay	85	0.73
Total	11, 658	100

Table 2 shows that the major types and frequency of football news characteristic features were football technical terms which were mostly found (59.76%), followed by short words (15.62%), abbreviations (10.49%), statistics (10.16%), alias (3.24%), and wordplay (0.73%) respectively.

Table 3. The Use of Football Technical Terms

Type of Feature	Frequency	
	of	Percent
	Occurrence	
1. Football technical terms	6,967	59.76
Examples of football technical terms:		
1.1 One- <u>Nil</u> Specialists Bayern Go 5 Clear (2005: 13B)		
1.2 ... Georgian international <u>midfielder</u> Levan Kobiashvili scoring the third <u>hat-trick</u> of the night – city rivals Inter are. (A Night of Hat-trick, 2005: 13B)		

Table 3 shows the frequency of football technical term occurrence which accounted for 59.76% of all football news feature word counts (6,967 out of 11, 658). In order to show the use of football technical terms found in the football news, examples of the technical terms are presented. Nil means zero; midfielder refers to players playing behind the forwards link together the offensive and defensive functions of the team, and hat-trick is a term used when one player gets three goals in the same match (England football online, 2005).

A plausible explanation for the frequent use of football technical terms as the main feature found in the football news was probably because these terms were well-

known among football fans. Also they were meant to give an exclusive sense to the football fans.

Table 4. The Use of Short Words

Type of Feature	Frequency	
	of	Percent
	Occurrence	
2. Short words	1,821	15.62

Examples of short words:

2.1 Munich were the heavy favourites coming to battered ... (Ballack to the Rescue of Bayern, 2005: 13A)

2.2 City rejected a £ 20 million offer from Chelsea for the player last week. (Big Deal Is Done, 2005: 12B)

Table 4 shows the frequency of short word occurrence which accounted for 15.62% of all football news feature word counts (1,821 out of 11, 658). In order to show the use of short words found in the football news, examples of the short words are presented. In Example 2.1, Munich refers to Bayern Munich, a German Football Club, and City in Example 2.2 is the short word of Manchester City. A plausible explanation for the use of short words found in football news was due to the conciseness of the short words. Therefore, it saved time and space when the writer used the terms.

Table 5. The Use of Abbreviations

Type of Feature	Frequency	Percent
	of	
	Occurrence	
3. Abbreviations	1,223	10.49
Examples of abbreviations:		
3.1 Germany is on the way to being a perfect		
World Cup host, <u>Fifa</u> President Joseph Blatter said		
yesterday ... (Blatter: World Cup Will Be Perfect,		
2005: 15B)		
3.2 ... chief executive Brian Barwick stressed the		
<u>FA</u> are keen for him to remain in charge until that		
time. (Choice of Sven Is Not Sensible, 2005: 10B)		

Table 5 shows the frequency of abbreviations occurrence which accounted for 10.49% of all football news feature word counts (1,223 out of 11, 658). In order to show the use of abbreviations found in the football news, examples of the abbreviations are presented. In Example 3.1, Fifa stands for Federation International of Football Association, and FA in Example 3.2 refers to Football Association. A plausible explanation for the use of abbreviations found in football news was due to the conciseness of the abbreviations. Therefore, it saved time and space when the writer used the terms. Moreover, Fifa and FA are official abbreviations and are also used in speech.

Some people do not even know what Federation of International Football Association, the full term for FIFA, is.

Table 6. The Use of Football Statistics

Type of Feature	Frequency of Occurrence	Percent
4. Statistics	1,184	10.16
Examples of statistics:		
4.1	Standings	
	P W D L F A PTS	
Jeventus	11 6 3 2 16 11 21	
Fiorentina	11 6 2 3 16 8 20	
(Juve Ride Their Luck, 2005: 12B)		
4.2	Leading Scorers	
12 – Miroslav Klose (Werder Bremen)		
10 – Halil Altintop (Kaiserslautern)		
(Scoreboard: German League, 2005: 13B)		

Table 6 shows the frequency of statistics occurrence which accounted for 10.16% of all football news feature word counts (1,184 out of 11, 658). In order to show the use of statistics found in the football news, examples of the statistics are presented. Example 4.1 shows the results and standings between Jeventus and Fiorentina before kicking off in

the next match. Example 4.2 presents leading scorers who scored the most in each league. The example informs us that in German League Miroslav Klose from Werder was the top-scoring player with 12 goals, and Halil Altintop from Kaiserslautern scored 10 goals. A plausible explanation for the use of statistics found in football news was to make the readers understand the news more easily and clearly.

Table 7. The Use of Alias

Type of Feature	Frequency	
	of	Percent
	Occurrence	
5. Alias	378	3.24
Examples of alias:		
5.1 ... Sunderland's first maximum haul since		
December, 2002, which lifted the <u>Black Cat</u> into		
19 th place and sent Everton to the bottom. (Black		
Cats End Their Losing Streak, 2005: 15B)		
5.2 Brazilian forward Julio " <u>The Beast</u> " Baptista		
donned the all white shirt of Real Madrid ...		
(Happiest Day of My Life: Beast, 2005: 15B)		

Table 7 shows the frequency of alias occurrence which accounted for 3.24% of all football news feature word counts (378 out of 11, 658). In Example 5.1, Black Cat refers to Sunderland Football Club, which has a black cat as a logo. In Example 5.2, The Beast

is the alias of Julio Baptista because of his aggressive football playing style. A plausible explanation for the use of alias found in football news was to make the news more interesting.

Table 8. The Use of Wordplay

Type of Feature	Frequency	Percent
	of Occurrence	
6. Wordplay	85	0.73

Examples of wordplay:

6.1 Cheeky Charlton chasing Chelsea (Addicks
Rarin' to Go, 2005: 10B)

6.2 Six matches, six wins and six points clear:
Chelsea's drive to retain their Premiership. (Six
Out of Six, 2005: 13B)

Table 8 shows the frequency of wordplay occurrence which accounted for 0.73% of all football news feature word counts (85 out of 11, 658). In order to show the use of wordplay found in the football news, examples of the wordplay are presented.

Example 6.1, "Cheeky Charlton chasing Chelsea" (Addicks Rarin' to Go, 2005: 10B), uses alliteration – "the repetition of the same consonant sounds or of different vowel sounds at the beginning of words or in stressed syllables" (the American heritage dictionary of the English language, 1992: 49) – to attract the readers' interest. It informs

the readers that Chelsea has a higher total score than Charlton, and then Charlton must try to beat Chelsea in the next football match.

In Example 6.2, “Six matches, six wins and six points clear: Chelsea’s drive to retain their Premiership” (Six Out of Six, 2005: 13B), obviously the repetition of the words “six” is used three times. It informs us that Chelsea has played six games and won all six and is six points ahead of its nearest rivals.

However, wordplay was usually found in headline and lead paragraph rather than in the body of football news data. A plausible explanation for the use of wordplay was to attract the readers’ interests in both the headline and lead paragraph.

In conclusion, the findings revealed the most favorite themes found in football news studied: off-the-field story, game story, pre-game story respectively. Moreover, the characteristic features found in football news such as football technical terms, short words, abbreviations, statistics, alias, and wordplay were respectively presented in tubular form after the frequency. The next chapter will discuss the results, some suggestions for applications and further studies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, a summary of the study and findings are presented. Then, discussion, applications, limitations of the study and suggestions for further studies are included

5.1 Conclusion

This research applied genre analysis proposed by Swales (1990), Bhatia (1993), Furguson's (1993), Livesey (1998) and sports news writing style proposed by Itule and Anderson's (2000), Leiter, Harriss and Johnson's (2000), as well as Mencher (2000) to analyze the linguistic description of football news as a sub-genre of journalese. In collecting data for the study, 240 pieces of football news totally comprising 120,069 word tokens were randomly collected from *The Nation* between July 1 and December 31, 2005. The analyses of the linguistic features can be summarized as follows:

1. According to the first objective, to investigate the most frequent themes in football news, the results revealed that the most favorite themes found in football news were off-the-field story (65.42 %), followed by game story (30.83 %) and pre-game story (3.75 %) respectively.

2. According to the second objective, to analyze the types of linguistic features of football news, the results revealed that six linguistic features were employed in the football news. They were football technical terms, short words, abbreviations, statistics, alias, and wordplay.

3. According to the third objective, to investigate the frequency of each feature found in football news, the results revealed that the most frequent features found in football news were football technical terms (59.76%), short words (15.62%), abbreviations (10.49%), statistics (10.16%), alias (3.24%), and wordplay (0.73%) respectively.

In short, the results of the study revealed that the most favorite themes found in football news were off-the-field story (65.42 %), and then followed by game story (30.83 %) and pre-game story (3.75 %) respectively. The findings in football news characteristic features revealed that there were six characteristic features employed in the football news data. In terms of frequency of occurrence, football technical terms were mostly found with 59.76%, followed by short words (15.62%), abbreviations (10.49%), statistics (10.16%), alias (3.24%), and wordplay (0.73%) respectively.

5.2 Discussion

In terms of language style analysis, the current research results are discussed in relation to Swales (1990), Bhatia's (1993) and Livesey's (1998) research. Regarding football news theme, the research results are related to Itule and Anderson's (2000) and Ferguson's (1993) research. Regarding football news writing style, the research results are related to Livesey's (1998), Leiter, Harriss and Johnson's (2000), as well as Mencher's (2000) research.

According to the study, the results support the findings by Itule and Anderson (2000: 324-335) and Ferguson (1993: 197-204) about sports news themes. In football news, there are three themes which are pre-game story, game story and off-the field story.

The results also revealed that three characteristic features of football news found in journealese linguistic features are in accordance with Livesey's (1998: 106-126) category. They are word play, abbreviations, and short words. According to the study, some features found in sports news are recognized as the news stylistic features in Leiter, Harriss and Johnson's (2000: 449-462) research such as statistics, alias, and technical terms.

5.3 Applications

The research finding can be applied to some linguistic activities as follows:

1. A corpus of sports news as a sports news writing model may be useful for amateur football columnists and student writers to practice and improve their writing.
2. The study can reveal football news characteristics to generate comprehension of football news writing and reading for others.
3. The characteristic features in the corpus of football news which are found in this study may be useful for studying language style in English for Specific Purposes courses.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

1. The data collected from this study might be regarded as local-oriented news from only one source, an English newspaper in Thailand *The Nation*. Therefore, the corpus might not be representative of sports news when compared with other sources, such as *The Sun* or *The Guardian*.
2. The results of this study might not be exactly the same as other results from similar research in the future because the data were unique and dependent on the situation that occurred in a certain period of time. For example, in November 2005, there was the 23rd SEA Games in the Philippines.
3. According to the small size of the corpus, the findings may not be generalized. A study on a larger amount of the corpus may yield different results.
4. This research limited the study to the style of sports news writing covering themes, football technical terms, short words, abbreviations, statistics, alias, and

wordplay. There are, however, other linguistic features in different genres for further studies.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

1. This study was conducted with only a corpus of football news language style.

There should be similar research on another genre such as economics or politics. Also, there should be research based on different kinds of sources such as *Bangkok Post*.

2. There should be a comparative study of language style between a corpus of sports news in Thai local newspapers and that in international newspapers which would be an alternative way for language learners to study the English language style.

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TEXTS

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