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From Pitch to Commentary Gantry: Investigating Syntactic Features in High-Pressure Events in the Sports Announcer Talk (SAT) of Football Commentators.

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Abstract

This MA thesis investigates the various syntactic elements in the register of football commentators to determine the presence of prevailing notions of temporal pressure. More precisely, the register of football commentators is defined as Sports Announcer Talk (SAT). Drawing on the theories of Increment Functional Grammar (IFG), this investigation addresses four research questions concerning on-pitch occurrences, the application of holophrastic utterances, formulaic language, and syntactic characteristics in high-pressure situations.

The study reveals a correlation between the employment of holophrastic utterances by commentators and the statistical metric Expected Goals (xG), wherein a predominant frequency of holophrastic utterances is associated with greater xG values. Furthermore, the prevalence and functions of time expressions are scrutinised, with the conclusion that different roles of commentary (play-by-play and colour commentators) exhibit varying frequencies of expressions. The analysis of formulaic routines in goal-scoring events identifies persistent structures involving player names, goals, metonymic and metaphoric sequences.

Moreover, the pervasive usage of right dislocation (RD) structures is discussed to explore their connection with temporal pressure. This study posits that RD structures are ubiquitous in the SAT register of football commentary contributing to their fluency in both pressurised and unpressurised linguistic settings. Overall, this study establishes the prevalence of temporal pressure in the SAT of football commentators and emphasises the significance of certain syntactic elements in high-pressure situations.

Acknowledgments

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List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BNC	British National Corpus
CA	Conversation Analysis
D	Draw
FDG	Functional Discourse Grammar
FG	Functional Grammar
G	Goals
GA	Goals Against
IFG	Increment Functional Grammar
KWIC	Keyword in Context
L	Loss
LD	Left Dislocation
NLU	Natural Language User
NP	Noun Phrase
PIE	Phrases in English
PTS	Points
RA	Referential Ambiguity
RD	Right Dislocation
SAT	Sports Announcer Talk
UG	Universal Grammar
W	Win
xG	Expected Goals
xGA	Expected Goals Against
xPTS	Expected Points

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1 Introduction

This MA thesis inquiries into the use of syntactic constraints and formulaic language among football commentators in television broadcast settings. The primary inspiration for this thesis was an inclination to bring the unfolding events on the pitch and the linguistic output of the football commentator closer to each other. Müller (2007) explains that the situational events in football matches "may have involved a quick sequence of events that may have forced them to react and adapt to this situation by speaking more quickly, shortening their utterances, using less complicated vocabulary" (20). Consequently, the aim of this MA thesis is to bring together the two distinct yet intertwined worlds of football and language production. It is debatable that commentators may utilise certain phrases and sentences in specific time-critical events that are merely habitual. The register of the football commentator was coined as Sports Announcer Talk (SAT) by Ferguson (1983), who argues that there are several syntactic features limited to this specific mode of speech. Some of these features are simplifications, inversions, result expressions, heavy modifiers, tense usage, and routines. Based on the theories of Mackenzie (1998, 2000, 2005), where he uses his own theory of Increment Functional Grammar (IFG) in time critical events in football matches, this thesis seeks to investigate the usage of the commentator's formulaic language in different situational events during a football match. Thus, this study investigates these routine elements of speech and also examines the syntactic structures. Additionally, this study explores how these linguistic aspects are connected to situational events in a football match. In short, this thesis addresses the following research questions:

1. How are on-pitch events critical in the linguistic output of the football commentator?
2. Is there any correlation between the commentator's usage of holophrastic utterances and the football metric xG?
3. How is formulaic language utilised by the commentator in goal-scoring events and are there any correlations to xG?
4. What are syntactic features of the SAT in events with high-time pressure?

Goldblatt (2007) asserts that football is a global cultural practice, and that no religion can match its geographical scope (30). It is evident that the exposure of football has increased during the last decades, and it becomes continually harder to recognise its working-class

heritage. Manoli & Kenyon (2018) demonstrate that the "growth in media incomes – primarily since the start of the English Premier League (EPL) in 1992 – accounts for a significant part of the massive transformation of the football industry" (88). Nowadays, the accessibility of watching football is simpler than it ever has been. Due to the possibility of online streaming on multiple devices, one has the possibility to watch the global game whenever and wherever one might please. As aforementioned, the English Premier League played a prominent role in the transformation of the football industry. Due to its widespread appeal, it is interesting to examine the linguistic routines of the broadcast commentators in this league. Therefore, this study applies a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the linguistic output of English Premier League commentators from the 2021/2022 season.

As a result of the global interest, Mackenzie (2005) explains that the football commentator is subject to significant pressure due to being the narrator of a medium which several millions watch every week. Because of the great interest in the sport and the commentator's frequent exposure, it is desirable to investigate the syntactic structure and formulaicness of the commentator's speech. An incentive of this study is to utilise the statistical metric of Expected Goals (xG) to conduct a comparative analysis to establish how the syntax of the commentator differs in matches with a contrasting xG number. More precisely, it is desirable to investigate the correlation between xG numbers and the commentator's syntactic restrictions. As previously asserted, the work of Mackenzie (1998, 2000, 2005) is regarded as the most pertinent within the field of IFG theory. It is assumed by Mackenzie (2005) that the restrictive nature of the commentator is a result of time pressure asserted in attacking events and will therefore encourage the usage of holophrastic utterances. Mackenzie (2000), in another work related to IFG theory, argues that holophrastic utterances operate as one-word utterances containing only one subact, either of reference or predication (35). The basis for utilising these is "to assume that a speaker will in principle invest a linguistic expression with no more (but also no less) information than is needed for satisfactory interpretation" (Mackenzie 267). Thus, this thesis utilises IFG theory to justify the inherence of holophrastic utterances in not only the SAT setting, but also in unplanned spoken discourse. Furthermore, IFG theory is used to analyse other syntactic elements that occur in the SAT, especially to determine whether certain parts of speech are routinised. Altogether, this process was conducted with an incentive to investigate several syntactic elements and to examine their relation to time-criticality.

1.1 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured into seven chapter, each serving a specific purpose in answering the posited research questions. The second chapter includes a theoretical framework which presents the fundamental concepts used in this thesis. More precisely, section 2.2.2 asserts the register of football commentators, and its roles and characteristics related to on-pitch events. Section 2.3 defines formulaic language, whilst section 2.4 elucidates the important components of IFG theory and its forebearers. Finally, section 2.5 aims to define the statistical terms xG and to ascertain its relevance in this thesis. Chapter 3 is connected to the previous chapter in the sense of establishing a theoretical basis. However, this chapter discusses previous works within the field of SAT research and football linguistics. The chapter is divided into five different sections all related to the research questions of this thesis. In particular, Mackenzie (2005) applies IFG theory to the SAT, Müller (2007) discerns syntactic constrains related to on-pitch events, Levin (2008) discusses the presence of formulaic routines in goal-scoring events, Callies & Levin (2019) study the role of right dislocation (RD) and left dislocation (LD), and Balzer-Siber (2015) affirms the role of copula deletion and deixis in the SAT. Chapter 4 presents the selection of material and data collection, transcription conventions and the construction of the corpus. Moreover, the chapter includes an account of how holophrastic utterances are selected in adherence to IFG conventions. Chapter 5 provides the findings from both quantitative and qualitative approaches. These are discussed in chapter 6 with an incentive of utilising the theories and previous research to discern whether there were any notions of time pressure related to the syntactic elements. Finally, chapter 7 suggests answers to the research questions posited in chapter 1. In addition, it provides an outlook for possible further studies in this field.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This thesis is placed in both a functional grammatical, phraseological, and pragmatic field in the linguistic context. Despite the broad approach, this thesis aims to target a sphere in linguistics which has been lacking in research. Although a plethora of psycholinguistic research shows that several modules of grammar (i.e. syntax, semantics and pragmatics) produce linguistically simpler representations when under time constraints, this phenomenon has received relatively little attention in discourse grammar traditions. It is therefore desirable to analyse linguistic elements that imply temporal pressure. More precisely, the incentive is to investigate the usage of time-critical utterances and syntactic variation in the SAT of football commentators. This chapter provides a foundation for the theories and concepts which are utilised in this study, while chapter 3 delves into the research which has been conducted within the field of SAT. Inherently, chapter 2 and 3 establish a basis for the discussion of the results for this study.

Of the theoretical concepts regarding the idiosyncratic aspects of the register of football commentators, IFG theory and the statistical metric Expected Goals are defined, delimited, and discussed in these sections. In order to comprehend the linguistic output of the commentator, section 2.2 below aims to characterise and define the commentator's linguistic situation.

2.2 The Register of Sports Announcer Talk

A "register" is a linguistic perspective that elaborates how a mode of speech can be altered due to situational characteristics. More specifically, Biber & Conrad (2009) explain that the register perspective considers core linguistic features like pronouns and verbs as functional, and that certain features are commonly used in association with the communicative purposes and situational context of texts (2). A register can therefore be considered as a specific mode of speech limited to different groups. One can argue that the characteristics of a register and dialect variation can easily be mixed. However, Biber & Conrad (2009) state that dialects are largely conventional and are closely related to a person's affiliation with a social group, whilst functionality in register variation is inherent (12).

Sports Announcer Talk (SAT) is a term coined by Ferguson (1983) to refer to the register of sportscasting. His study revolved around the linguistic aspects of the commentator in live baseball broadcasting. Although the material in the study was collected from radio, several researchers within the field of live television broadcasting have used Ferguson's definition and elaboration of the SAT as fundamental in their own research. Ferguson (1983) defines the register of sportscasting as the "oral reporting of an ongoing activity, combined with provision of background information and interpretation" (155-156). The "background information" consists of research done by the commentator prior to the match, while "interpretation" is the choice of words which the commentator uses to narrate the events. Considering the characteristics of syntactic structures in the SAT register, Ferguson (1983) presents six recurrent linguistic aspects: simplifications, inversions, result expressions, heavy modifiers, tense usage, and routines. In terms of simplification, copula absence, or deletion, is one of the prevalent syntactic aspects. The copula in the sentence usually represents an expected part in syntax which is not inherently detrimental for the semantic meaning of the utterance (Ferguson 159). One can argue that absence of sentence initial elements is present in many registers, and according to Ferguson (1983), these can be named "prosiopesis" and represent a long-recognised feature in both spoken and written registers of English (158).

Another study related to the SAT register is conducted by Reaser (2003). The study provides a quantitative and statistical approach to the analysis of basketball commentary in terms of the inter-register variation of SAT. In simpler terms, his analysis is based on the register features of radio and TV commentary. It is evident that Reaser's (2003) findings from the television broadcasts are the most relevant for this MA thesis. Although basketball and football are two different sports, with varying degrees of time pressure and rapid succession of on-pitch events, one can argue that there are similar register features in the SAT of both sports. In likeness with Ferguson (1983), Reaser (2003) bases his research on syntactic elements that are regarded as eminent in the SAT. These syntactic aspects are subject deletion, copula deletion and heavy modifiers all based in the game situations. Examples from all of these syntactic elements are presented below where (1) provides an example of subject simplification, (2) copula absence, (3a) and (3b) subject-action inversion, and heavy modifiers (4). The examples are collected from the transcriptions of the matches utilised for this study. It is important to note that example (3a) is a direct extract from Appendix 1. However, (3b) is an inverted example of sentence (3a), with an incentive of presenting how subject-action inversion

can function in two different ways.

(1) [He] `was lucky.` (Appendix 1, lines 288-289)

(2) `Dalot` [is] `right footed so he can almost wait for him to come inside.` (Appendix 2 lines 49-50)

(3a) `That's a good challenge by Pogba.` (Appendix 1, line 650)

(3b) `Pogba made a good challenge.` (Inverted example of Appendix 1, line 650)

(4) `He's got a very generous smile, Kenny Dalglish.` (Appendix 2, lines 239-240)

Reaser's (2003) findings proves that these "prototypical features of SAT (subject deletion, copula absence, inversion, and heavy modifiers) are a part of both subregisters, but quantitative analysis of these features furthers the divide between the radio and television broadcasts" (310). Nevertheless, his quantitative approach identifies the aforementioned subregister features of radio and television broadcasts and ultimately distinguishes the frequencies of the usage of features in the two modes of SAT speech.

2.2.1 Play-by-play and Colour Commentary

According to Chovanec (2018), there are two different phases of the SAT: play-by-play and colour commentary (38). The former refers to the announcing of the events taking place at the time of discourse. In simpler terms, the play-by-play commentator has the responsibility of narrating the ongoing events on the pitch. Ferguson (1983) demonstrates that if a play-by-play commentator is not accompanied by a colour commentator, one must accommodate this monologic role as well (156). However, if accompanied by a colour commentator, the possibility of creating a dialogue arises between the play-by-play and the colour commentator. In simpler terms, the play-by-play commentator can be characterised as the primary commentator due to the central role in narrating the match. The colour commentator can be characterised as a secondary commentator, due to the role of accompanying the narrative with evaluative and strategical information. Reaser (2003) argues that colouring operates differently in radio broadcasts than television broadcasts, since "television announcers have more freedom

to use more involved methods of coloring, such as discussion of strategy, whereas the radio commentators are more restricted to quick and relatively incidental coloring" (315). Due to the visual benefit of television broadcasts, the colour-commentators are thus inclined to utilise specific event-related commentaries, which is elaborated in section 2.2.2 below. In the matches selected for this study, there was a presence of two colour commentators. Both are referred to as "secondary" due to their similar role in supplying strategic and descriptive information.

2.2.2 Event-Related Commentary and Roles

As elaborated in section 2.2.1, there are different roles assigned to the play-by-play and the colour commentator. Both commentator roles entail different norms and obligations in the narrative of the broadcast. These roles are not implied by the broadcast channels but are rather commentator conventions that one must adhere to in order to make the narrative more engaging for the viewer. Several scholars elaborate the different expectations of the play-by-play and colour commentators in terms of the events on the pitch. Reaser (2003) presents his perception of the different modes of commentary and its communicative functions as:

Action description; discussion of coach's or player's, *strategy*; a *report* on either current game or player status (i.e. time or statistics); a *recap* of a previous play; a *hypothetical* situation that is not related to strategy; an *evaluation* of a player's current game performance; *background* on a player's, team's, or coach's past performances.

(Reaser 306)

Examples of the communicative functions from Reaser (2003) are provided in sentences (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10) and (11) below. Each sentence was extracted from the transcriptions of the selected matches for this study. Action description is prevalent in sentence (5), where the commentator describes an ongoing action on the pitch. Sentence (6) can be categorised as strategy, due to its inclusion of analytic and strategic notion. An example of report is found in sentence (7), where the commentator provides the information that Liverpool FC had scored five goals inside five minutes. Sentence (8) can be categorised as recap, which

was evident due to the usage and reference to an instant replay of a given situation" (315). As elaborated above, the hypothetical situation is not related to strategy, but rather implies possible outcomes for future actions by a team, player or coach. A hypothetical function is evident in sentence (9) where the colour-commentator commentator Jamie Carragher predicts the possibility of Liverpool FC winning the 2021/2022 Premier League title. Moreover, sentence (10) entails an example of evaluation, where the colour-commentator Gary Neville provides his opinion on a tackle made by the Manchester United player Bruno Fernandes. Lastly, sentence (11) operates as an example of background. This is due to its function of providing background information to a situation that was ongoing in the match.

(5) *Action Description*: `Jota gets the better of McTominay.`
(Appendix 1, line 216)

(6) *Strategy*: `Liverpool just drop a little deep and allow Manchester United to play some passes across them.`
(Appendix 1, lines 227-228)

(7) *Report:* `It's five inside five minutes of the second half.`
(Appendix 1, lines 565-566)

(8) *Recap:* `There was the chance for Marcus Rashford, we've had a look at that replay, he was onside` (Appendix 2, lines 430-431).

(9) *Hypothetical:* `I think the one big thing Liverpool have at the moment is the fitness of all the players and if he can keep that to the end of the season, that gives him a great chance.`
(Appendix 2, lines 770-772).

(10) *Evaluation:* `That's not a good tackle by Bruno Fernandes.`
(Appendix 1, line 528).

(11) *Background*: `Sancho wasn't in the last squad and Alexander-Arnold was injured.` (Appendix 2, line 608-609).

Both Müller (2007) and Mackenzie (2005) determine a somewhat similar, but less detailed account of a categorisation of event-commentary. Although their findings related to syntactic structures in the SAT of football commentators are both enticing, the communicative functions of Reaser (2003) are utilised in this study. More specifically, these are used in the investigation of both communicative and discourse functions of dislocation structures, which is elaborated in section 5.2.4. The degrees of time pressure and event-related commentary from the perspective of Mackenzie (2005) are discussed in section 3.1, while the same issue from Müller (2007) is elaborated in section 3.2.

2.3 Formulaic Language

It is an intricate task to present an unambiguous definition of formulaic language, as several scholars have different perceptions on the matter. However, Wray (2002), an acclaimed scholar in the field of formulaic language, provides an adequate definition of the phenomenon as:

> A sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar.
>
> (Wray 9)

In simpler terms, Wray discerns that formulaic sequences are memorised lexical phrases that can be uttered in a certain event where the speaker does not have to think about how to form the sentence grammatically. The speaker can thus utter the formulaic phrase to accommodate the setting of the utterance. Furthermore, Kuiper (1996) provided the fundamental criteria to define the term "formulae" as (a) they consist of sequences of words, (b) they have syntactic structure, and (c) they provide particular tasks for speakers in certain situations (96). Thence, the three criteria from Kuiper (1996) establishes a basis for the functions of formulaic language in speech.

Moreover, it is arguable that commentators retrieve certain formulaic utterances from their memory. A vital part of the sports commentator's work is to be prepared before the broadcast. The preparation consists of comprehensive research on both teams, players, and other trivial facts that commentators assume to be appealing information for the viewers. One can argue that preparation in language is a substantial part of the plan, as the commentator can prepare different formulaic phrases in advance. Football commentary can be perceived as a fast-paced and dynamic form of discourse in which the commentators must be able to provide accurate and informative descriptions of the game in real time. Utilising formulaic language thus allows them to do this by providing a set of ready-made phrases and expressions that can be used to describe common events and situations on the pitch. Müller (2007) argues that the acquisition of formulaic routines is expected from the commentators and that developing different strategies of how to describe certain situation helps them to keep up with the game (167). It is therefore conceivable that memorised constructions are prevalent in the SAT register.

Although these formulaic sequences are primarily individual, Ferguson (1983) argues that the formulaicness is indeed a marker of the register as well as an individual utterance (167). However, it is vital to comprehend that formulaic expressions differ from commentator to commentator. Although there are words and phrases that are frequently used by commentators in certain events in a football match, it does not mean that the utilisation of these linguistic phenomena is standardised. The routines in the SAT are "prefabricated stretches of discourse ranging from idiomatic phrases to fairly lengthy routines" (Ferguson 165). It is thus noteworthy to understand that the routines in the SAT are not limited to only utterances at the sentential level, but also at the word level. As an example, he presents the word *count* and its multidimensional usage in baseball. Müller explains that the same occurrence of formulaic expression at the word level is to be found in football commentary where the verb *find* is followed by a direct object. An example of this syntactic formulation can be found in Appendix 1: *Alexander-Arnold trying to find the feet of Firmino* (Appendix 1, line 23). Inherently, it is important to note that formulaic constructions also appear at the word level.

Although Ferguson (1983) asserts the prevalence of formulaic expressions as routine elements, Chovanec (2018) argues that Ferguson overlooks the fact that commentators use language in a non-routine way. Indeed, Chovanec declares that the commentators use creative

forms intentionally and that this is associated with the aim to establish an interest by the audience (41). Therefore, a commentator will try to construct witty utterances that correspond with the events on the pitch. This linguistic creativity is expressed through different levels of word formations (nonce-words), rhetorical devices (metaphors, similes) and syntactic combinations (ad-hoc phrases, de-idiomitisation by means of disrupting collocates, etc.) (Chovanec 41). It is thus desirable among commentators to use these different levels to bolster their identity and originality, and further gain popularity among the fans.

2.4 (Increment) Functional Grammar

2.4.1 Functional Grammar (FG) and Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG)

Before elaborating on the relevance of Increment Functional Grammar (IFG) in this study, it is first vital to discuss the forebearers of this grammatical phenomenon. Henceforth, the theories of Functional Grammar (FG) and Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG) shape the general architecture of IFG. Dik (1997) postulates that verbal interaction through language is constrained by norms and is thus a part of a structured activity (3). It is therefore a part of a functional paradigm of linguistic interaction in which a natural language user (NLU) is expected to have knowledge on how to utilise linguistic expressions in line with the given principles and rules. Although linguistic expressions are somewhat constrained, the NLU may not always be aware of the functionality of their utterances. The principles and rules of a linguistic setting can be analysed through the theory of FG. One may argue that Dik's (1997) publications on this grammatical theory are perceived as the most prominent. Its functionality is defined by Mackenzie (2005) in that it is "functional in positing that language is above all an instrument of communication between human beings; Functional *Grammar* is a *grammar* in being concerned with the formal properties of languages" (114). More precisely, FG's main concern is to discuss how one can utilise linguistic elements to influence one another. Further, Mackenzie (2005) describes that within FG, the sentence is perceived as the largest unit of structure in the organisation of language and that each sentence entails a meaning which is represented in a precise formalism (114). It is therefore possible to discern that FG deals with grammar at a cognitive level and aims its focus on the communicative functions of grammar.

One can therefore argue that FG deals with both semantic and pragmatic functions. However, Butler (2003) argues that FG as a theory has inadequacies related to pragmatic functions (117). Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG) operates as a supplementary theory to FG that contributes to the pragmatic functions, as it is assigned to the interpersonal level. The different levels of FDG are *interpersonal, representational, morphosyntactic* and *phonological*. These are a part of the grammatical component of FDG, where the utterance of the speaker is formulated and encoded. Another difference from FG is that FDG considers the discourse act as the basic unit of analysis, whereas the former operates with sentences as the main unit (Mackenzie 116). More precisely, FDG's focus on the discourse act allows for an analysis beyond clausal structures. Moreover, the interpersonal level will serve as a basis for the analysis of the research conducted in this thesis. It is possible to analyse utterances on the interpersonal level through a model of layering. In Figure 1 below from Keizer (2015), the different aspects of layers to the interpersonal level are exemplified:

Move (M_1)

Discourse Act (A_1)   Discourse Act (A_2)   Discourse Act (A_3)

Illocution (F_1)   Speech Participants (P_1, P_2)   Communicated Content (C_1)

Ascriptive Subact(s) (T_1)   Referential Subact(s) (R_1)
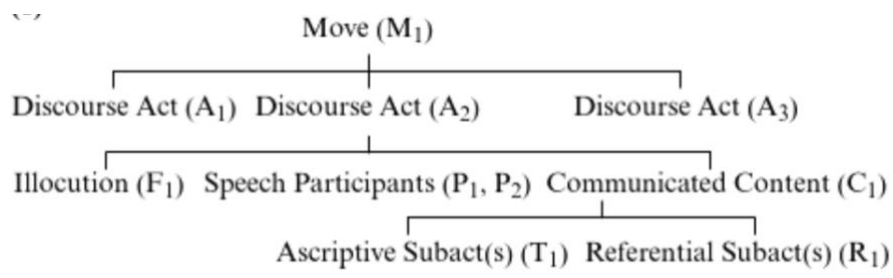
Figure 1: FDG Layering of Discourse Act (Keizer 32)

The overarching layer of interaction is the move, and it is perceived to be the largest unit of discourse. According to Keizer (2015): "Moves either start an interaction, provoking a reaction from the Addressee or are themselves a reaction to another Move" (308). Further, the move provides different discourse acts to its construction, which operate as the configurational head of the illocution, speech participants and communicated content. Illocution is essential in the configurational head of the discourse act as it represents the conventionalised means available in language to indicate the speaker's communicative intentions (Keizer 60). Moreover, the illocution is represented by three types: declarative, interrogative and imperative. Sentence (11), (12) and (13) below provide examples of how the types of

illocutions differ. Due to the narrative role of the play-by-play commentator, one can argue that most of illocutions are declarative. However, in conversational instances between the play-by-play commentator and colour-commentator, interrogative illocutions may appear. Lastly, one can argue that imperative illocutions occur when either of the commentators give strategical or evaluative remarks. In simpler terms, the imperative illocutions may entail a recommendation of what the team, player or coach should do in order to perform better.

Declarative:

(11) Jonas went to the bathroom.

Interrogative:

(12) Did Jonas go to the bathroom?

Imperative:

(13) Go to the bathroom, Jonas!

As Figure 1 portrays, subacts are categorised under communicated content. Inherently, the Communicated Content represents the intention of the speaker to refer to certain entities and to provide new information to the addressee in a certain discourse situation (Keizer 73). The last layer in the interpersonal level of FDG is the categorisation of different subacts. More precisely, subacts are "the smallest interpersonal units, which together 'evoke' the totality of the message the Speaker wish to convey" (Keizer 83). The subacts in FDG are divided into either referential or ascriptive subacts. The referential subact is characterised by the notion that it represents the speaker's attempt to evoke a referent. More specifically, referential subacts are usually uttered with an incentive of providing new and salient information. A habitual characteristic of referential subacts is the fact that they are usually Noun Phrases (NP), although this is not always the case (Keizer 91). In contrast, ascriptive subacts entail different functions to discourse. According to Keizer (2015), "ascriptive subacts serve to evoke a property, that is, anything that can be ascribed to entity" (83). In simpler terms, one can discern that ascriptive subacts add attribute qualities or characteristics to a referent. Altogether, the two different subacts operate in different ways to evoke either entity or property to the communicated content in speech.

The theories of FG and FDG serves as a basis for how unplanned utterances operate in speech. One can argue that perceiving the utterances of the commentator in the manner of FDG, facilitates the understanding of speech production. The limitations of the commentator's utterances are connected to the time pressure that cohere to the events on the pitch. One can argue that there are discrepancies when operating with FG and FDG in the analysis of the SAT of football commentators. This is due to the absence on the focus of temporality. Namely, section 2.4.2 below describes why the theory of IFG is regarded as an apt alternative to FG and FDG in terms of temporality.

2.4.2 Increment Functional Grammar (IFG)

Incremental Functional Grammar (IFG) shares the general architecture of FG and FDG and is a subtheory construed by J. Lachlan Mackenzie. With a predicament to establish a foundation for this theory, Mackenzie (2000) argues that the incentive of applying IFG to linguistic research "is to bring FG closer to work in the modelling of production and comprehension and thereby to increase its claim to psychological adequacy" (34). Therefore, the theories of FG are not neglected in IFG. The latter is rather supplying aspects that were not included in FG and that IFG picks up on throw-away remarks from Dik (1997). In contrast to FG, IFG adds a temporal dimension to its architecture which is relevant when analysing the time-critical utterances of football commentators. Mackenzie (2005) explains the operation of speech production in IFG manner is initiated by the speaker's succession of mental activities that are represented in the cognitive component (119). Moreover, these are transmitted to the interpersonal component, which is to be found within the grammatical component. The activation order in the interpersonal level corresponds to the order of the mental activation that prompted communication. The input of this level, along with sequences of moves, acts, and subacts with their respective operators, are generated bit by bit as ideas form in the speaker's mind. Mackenzie (2005) declares that "as soon as it is ready, a piece of the output of the inter-personal level can […] be dispatched to the phonological level for rapid articulation" (119). Altogether, this process explains the speech production in IFG theory.

As this thesis aims to investigate the syntactic constraints of the commentator in pressurised events, it is inherent to consider how IFG theory defines time-critical utterances.

One can argue that restriction in syntax can be compared to the definition of ellipsis. Mackenzie (2000) explains that "elliptical utterances will not, as is traditional, be regarded as reduced clauses; on the contrary, they will be seen as partially expanded utterances, with full clauses being maximally elaborated discourse acts" (24). In that sense, IFG does not regard syntactic structures with omitted constituents as deficient. With this perception of elliptical utterances, one can argue that these are perceived as incremental, that is, segments of language that are found in discourse acts. In terms of the structure of discourse acts in IFG terms, Mackenzie (2000) argues that "each discourse act consists of a sequence of interlocking subacts of reference, of predication, or of discourse organization" (35). More precisely, the primary distinguishing factor of these subacts is their function, and even though they might overlap, they generally correspond to their constituents. As elaborated in section 2.4.3 below, the primary constituents that are considered in this thesis are the holophrastic utterances.

An additional characteristic in IFG theory is the prevalence of the pragmatic functions Focus and Topic. In this thesis, the pragmatic function Focus is the most pertinent of the two. Mackenzie (2000) argues that every utterance has a point and that the "subact most saliently reflecting this "point" will be assigned the pragmatic function Focus, which will be expected to correlate with formal manifestations, in English at least with intonational properties" (36). Due to IFG's incremental approach to language production, one can argue that the pragmatic function Focus can operate in a sentence initial placement and is realised with intonational prominence.

As mentioned in section 2.4.1, this thesis applies the IFG theory as opposed to the more traditional theories of FG and FDG. An implicit reason for this selection was the aforementioned operations of language production. The incremental procedure can be correlated with the communicative functions of the SAT of football commentators. This claim is supported by Mackenzie (2005), who utilised IFG theory to justify the syntactic constraints of football commentators (see section 3.1). Moreover, IFG's perception of minimal utterances, or holophrastic utterances, as vital elements in language production is relevant for this study. This is due to this thesis' aims of analysing the correlation between the statistical metric xG and holophrastic utterances.

2.4.3 Holophrastic Utterances

In conversations where there is an evident transparency between the interlocutors, not every sentence is required to have a complete syntactic armature to be understood. Mackenzie (1998) elaborates this transparency that in situations where the participants of a conversation know each other well and if there is a great task urgency, verbal interaction takes place in significantly short units (268). Within the field of IFG, these minimal utterances are defined as holophrastic utterances. These appear in numerous situations in everyday conversation, significantly in the linguistic utterances of children. A young child's linguistic proficiency will be limited in terms of vocabulary and syntactic complexity. Therefore, the child will use holophrastic utterances to convey their messages to their parents. For example, the word "hungry" will be uttered when the child feels hunger and wants to share this message to someone who can bring the child food. The young child will not, however, have the linguistic capacity to construct a compound sentence to express the same message. A more advanced command would be: "I am feeling hunger and I want you to feed me". Brink (2020) states that the holophrastic usage is a phase during which young children start to use their first lexical items to fulfil more complex communicative intentions with one-word utterances (22). However, the holophrastic usage is not omitted from the linguistic output of an adult, although one can argue that it operates in a different way.

As explained in 2.4.2, IFG picks up on throwaway remarks from Dik's work on FG. Mackenzie (1998) argues that there are syntactic aspects neglected in the traditional FG: "Previous work on FG has thus […] rejected the traditional position that the implicitness of much everyday verbal interaction is a matter of performance, with incomplete utterances being seen as degenerate congeners of complete sentences" (271). In this way, the traditional conventions of FG interpret minimal utterances, incomplete utterances, or holophrastic utterances as insufficient elements in the colloquial speech. This is due to the desire of analysing complete sentences. One can argue that the traditional FG overlooked the communicative functions of holophrastic utterances in everyday communication. The utilisation of brief utterances is thus "possible in situations where speaker and hearer know each other well, where the context of communication is familiar to both parties, where there is a restricted referential environment, and/or where the conversation is supported by gesture and other forms of proxemic and kinesic communication" (Mackenzie 39). In simpler terms, the

common environment between either interlocutor or listener is important when verbalising holophrastic utterances. However, Givón (1988) demonstrates that "a communicative task is more urgent when the information be communicated is either less predictable or more important" (275). Firstly, one can argue that the commentator is dependent on uttering the least predictable events, that is, the player's actions on the pitch. Secondly, there is an evident incentive of narrating the important events. These events could be categorised as goals, goal-scoring chances or vital decisions made by the referee.

Analysing the commentators' usage of holophrastic utterances is relevant for this study in terms of establishing the time pressure. Mackenzie (2005) declares that holophrastic utterances are central in the analysis approach of IFG due to its strategy of taking minimal utterances as the "starting point for grammatical analysis" (119). It is inherent to note that although an utterance might be perceived as minimal or holophrastic, Mackenzie (2000) argues that there is an underlying inclination that the holophrastic utterance consists of only one subact (36). It is possible to assume that certain phrases are holophrastic due to their brevity and minimal pragmatic function. As is discussed further in section 6.4, the phrase *here's Keita* (Appendix 1, line 67) can be perceived as a minimal utterance with limited subacts. However, it is important to note that the utterance consists of two subacts, one of reference and one of predication. This will not, however, be regarded as a holophrastic utterance. This is due to the phrase's incorporation of several subacts, as opposed to one. On the other hand, the example from Mackenzie's (2005) study *Shearer* (123) entails only one subact of reference. One can therefore determine this as a holophrastic utterance. Although *here's Keita* can operate as a linguistic construction, it cannot be considered as a holophrastic utterance. The inclusion of only one subact is therefore an inherent factor in the investigation of a holophrastic utterance, which is discussed in further detail in section 4.4.4.

2.5 Expected Goals and its Relevance to the Selection of Matches

2.5.1 The Framework of Expected Goals

The concept of Expected Goals or xG, will serve as a fundamental factor in the selection of matches in this thesis. According to Whitmore (2021), the phenomenon is the most widespread and insightful within football analytics. He further elaborates that "expected goals measures

the quality of a chance by calculating the likelihood that it will be scored from a particular position on the pitch during a particular phase of play" (2021). It is usual that xG stats are displayed throughout a broadcasted football match. Being provided with this metric, the viewer ascertains a statistical impression of which team is most likely to score more goals than the other. The xG of a team is based on multiple in-game factors. In football, the most common event that leads to a goal is when a player takes a shot. The shot must be directed towards the perimeters of the goal to have a probability to end up in the goal. Brechot & Flepp (2020) explain that every shot provides a certain scoring probability based on different circumstances and that there are eight given factors that are expected to influence the probability of a shot ending up as a goal (340). Notable factors are the location on the pitch, rule setting, body part, defensive pressure, motion sequence, player finishing skills, goalkeeper skills, and other features. All of the mentioned factors have concurrent idiosyncratic aspects added to them. More precisely, these factors are displayed in Table 1 below.

Location on the pitch	Rule setting	Body part	Defensive pressure
– Distance	– Open play	– Foot	– Position of defenders
– Angle	– Free kick	– Header	– Position of goalkeeper
	– Penalty kick	– Other body parts	– Body contact
			– . . .
Motion sequence	**Player finishing skills**	**Goalkeeper skills**	**Other**
– Out of the air	– Motor skills	– Motor skills	– Pitch conditions
– Out off a dribble	– Mental abilities	– Mental abilities	– Spin of the ball
– First touch			– Wind influence
– . . .			– . . .

Table 1: Factors influencing the scoring probability of a shot. Brechot & Flepp (340)

Therefore, one may perceive xG as numbers operating as indicators of goal-scoring probability in football. It is therefore interesting to analyse the relation between the xG metric in football and the syntax of commentators. As will be addressed in chapter 3, there has been previous research on the syntax of football commentators and their relation to time pressure. However, the inclusion of the recent statistical metric has not been considered in the field of SAT research. Therefore, it is an unrivalled approach to include xG as a metric of gauging the quality of events in a football match with regards to the syntactic element. Ultimately, one

can argue that the utilisation of modern statistical metrics such as xG in linguistic research serves to bring the actions on the pitch and the linguistic output of the commentator to a closer level.

2.5.2 xG in the 2021/2022 Premier League Season and the Selection of Matches

Table 2 below presents the overall xG per team in the 2021/2022 season. As portrayed in the columns on the left, the table presents the wins (W), draws (D), losses (L), goals (G), goals against (GA) and (PTS) points that each team has achieved during the season. In the columns on the right, one can analyse the xG, expected goals against (xGA) and expected points (xPTS) the metric has determined each team to achieve based on the statistics from every match played. In each column on the right side of the table, there are either green or red numbers added to each expected event. These numbers represent the actual statistics from the season. More precisely, the coloured numbers and the usage of plus or minus symbols provide the information whether the team overachieved or underachieved their xG. Manchester City had a total of 99 goals throughout the season. The xG of Manchester City is 93.40 and $^{-5.60}$ is added to the number which represents a subtraction of the actual goals scored. The subtraction provides the information that Manchester City produced 5.60 more goals than what the xG has predicted them to score. Therefore, the xG metric is not always equal to the goals scored, but it rather serves as an indicator based on the quality of chances produced in football matches.

№	Team	M	W	D	L	G	GA	PTS	xG	xGA	xPTS
1	Manchester City	38	29	6	3	99	26	93	93.40 [-5.60]	25.21 [-0.79]	91.88 [-1.12]
2	Liverpool	38	28	8	2	94	26	92	93.02 [-0.98]	32.73 [+6.73]	86.56 [-5.44]
3	Chelsea	38	21	11	6	76	33	74	69.30 [-6.70]	35.12 [+2.12]	73.38 [-0.62]
4	Tottenham	38	22	5	11	69	40	71	67.95 [-1.05]	43.70 [+3.70]	66.09 [-4.91]
5	Arsenal	38	22	3	13	61	48	69	63.39 [+2.39]	48.39 [+0.39]	64.76 [-4.24]
6	Manchester United	38	16	10	12	57	57	58	57.21 [+0.21]	56.85 [-0.15]	54.52 [-3.48]
7	West Ham	38	16	8	14	60	51	56	54.98 [-5.02]	53.88 [+2.88]	53.56 [-2.44]
8	Leicester	38	14	10	14	62	59	52	49.49 [-12.51]	66.11 [+7.11]	42.31 [-9.69]
9	Brighton	38	12	15	11	42	44	51	49.57 [+7.57]	47.21 [+3.21]	54.18 [-3.18]
10	Wolverhampton Wanderers	38	15	6	17	38	43	51	39.04 [+1.04]	58.48 [+15.48]	40.54 [-10.46]
11	Newcastle United	38	13	10	15	44	62	49	41.53 [-2.47]	62.71 [+0.71]	41.53 [-7.47]
12	Crystal Palace	38	11	15	12	50	46	48	48.84 [-1.16]	41.33 [-4.67]	58.15 [+10.15]
13	Brentford	38	13	7	18	48	56	46	52.89 [+4.89]	49.50 [-6.50]	56.00 [+10.00]
14	Aston Villa	38	13	6	19	52	54	45	43.13 [-8.87]	53.10 [-0.90]	46.20 [+1.20]
15	Southampton	38	9	13	16	43	67	40	47.35 [+4.35]	64.56 [-2.44]	43.45 [+3.45]
16	Everton	38	11	6	21	43	66	39	44.47 [+1.47]	60.69 [-5.31]	43.54 [+4.54]
17	Leeds	38	9	11	18	42	79	38	51.19 [+9.19]	71.31 [-7.69]	43.86 [+5.86]
18	Burnley	38	7	14	17	34	53	35	41.11 [+7.11]	60.22 [+7.22]	38.10 [+3.10]
19	Watford	38	6	5	27	34	77	23	39.34 [+5.34]	67.53 [-9.47]	35.45 [+12.45]
20	Norwich	38	5	7	26	23	84	22	31.51 [+8.51]	80.08 [-3.92]	25.04 [+3.04]

Table 2: Overall xG per Team in the EPL in the 2021/2022 season.
https://understat.com/league/EPL/2021. Accessed 18th of December 2022.

The relevance for utilising xG as a tool for selecting matches in this study is to construct a comparative analysis to how events in one match influence the utterances of the commentator. This study will analyse both fixtures between Manchester United and Liverpool FC in the 2021/2022 season. Although there is only one goal that differentiates the final results of the two matches, the total xG of the matches are notably different. Table 3 below displays the in-game statistics of the first fixture between Manchester United and Liverpool FC on the October 24th, 2021, in the aforementioned season. Liverpool FC took an early lead in the match and proceeded to go into half-time with a 4-0 lead in Manchester, and later in the second half scored their fifth to win 5-0. Although Liverpool FC managed to score five goals, the xG metric indicated a number of 4.05xG. Manchester United, however, reached a total of 1.36xG, giving the impression that they did not deliver in terms of the quality of chances they produced in the match. Moreover, the number of total "shots" and "shots on target" is noteworthy. As previously elaborated, the statistic "shot" is represented by the general act of hitting the ball with the intention of scoring, while "shot on target" indicates that the shot is directed towards

the perimeters of the goal. In this match, there was a total of 31 shots where 12 shots were on target. Liverpool FC had an average of 19.2 shots per game while Manchester United had an average of 13.4 shots per game in the 2021/2022 season[1]. These numbers were collected from the official Premier League website, more specifically on the page "Total Scoring Attempts by Club in a Season". Here, the total shots were divided by 38, which is the total number of matches for each respective team during a season. It is evident in Table 3 below that the number of total shots for both teams in this match is profoundly similar to their average numbers throughout the season. It is therefore valid to claim that the number of shots in the first fixture between Manchester United and Liverpool FC in the 2021/2022 season illustrates that the match had an adequate frequency of chances.

Manchester United	TEAMS	Liverpool
	CHANCES	91%
0	GOALS	5
1.36	xG	4.05
12	SHOTS	19
4	SHOTS ON TARGET	8
7	DEEP	13
60.71	PPDA	8.23
0.15	xPTS	2.78

Table 3: In-game statistics from Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC October 24th, 2021.
https://understat.com/match/16463 Accessed January 16th, 2023.

In a similar manner, Table 4 below shows the in-game statistics from the second fixture between Liverpool FC and Manchester United in the 2021/2022 season. This match was played in Liverpool on the April 19th, 2021. Although the final result, which ended 4-0 to Liverpool

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[1] Premier League. "Total Scoring Attempts by Club in a Season." Premier League Stats, https://www.premierleague.com/stats/top/clubs/total_scoring_att?se=418

FC, is relatively similar to the fixture displayed in Table 4, the total xG in this match is 2.37xG. In simpler terms, the xG in this match is below half of the xG from the first fixture, which was 5.41xG. Liverpool FC opened the match strongly, scoring two goals in the first twenty minutes. Although the play-by-play commentator and colour commentators asserted the improvement of Manchester United in the second half, their opposition managed to score two more goals in the latter stages of the match which ultimately assured their victory. The xG of Liverpool FC in this match, which was 2.26xG, is significant as it is remarkably lower than the final number of goals they scored. In comparison, Manchester United produced a relatively low xG number of 0.11. This indicates that the quantity and quality of Manchester United's chances were not very likely to end as goals.

Liverpool	TEAMS	Manchester United
92%	CHANCES	
4	GOALS	0
2.26	xG	0.11
14	SHOTS	2
5	SHOTS ON TARGET	1
14	DEEP	3
11.94	PPDA	30.05
2.82	xPTS	0.10

Table 4: In-game statistics Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United April 19th 2022. https://understat.com/match/16669 Accessed January 16th 2023.

As mentioned, it is definite that the xG numbers of football matches do not always predict a similar number to the actual score-line after 90 minutes. However, the metric operates as the most reliable form of data with the aims of gauging the quality of chances and their probability of ending up in the back of the net. The xG metric will be utilised in that fashion, that is, to get an impression of the quality of the shots and matching the linguistic output of the commentator. The xG between Manchester United and Liverpool FC in the 2021/2022 season

served as interesting examples of how similar results entail different xG numbers, which were analysed comparatively with the commentator's holophrastic usage in section 5.1.1, and formulaic language in section 5.2.2.

3 Previous Research

Callies & Levin's *Corpus Approaches to the Language of Sports* (2019) is the most recent collection of studies conducted within the field of football linguistics. As an encouragement, they argue that researchers should aim to "advance the scope of corpus-linguistic research more generally in that it highlights the potential and the necessity of studying the language of sports in association with its accompanying audio-visual modes of communication from a multimodal perspective" (2). Indeed, this MA thesis aims to fulfil this encouragement with the aims of justifying the extra-linguistic event, that is, the visual events happening on the football pitch, to the linguistic output of the commentator. In order to answer the research questions presented in chapter 1, there is a need to discuss the previous research which has been conducted in this field. More precisely, the previous research which is discussed in chapter 3 will serve as a theoretical and conceptual basis for the findings in chapter 5.

In this chapter, the findings from five different studies are presented and discussed in terms of relevance to this study. Firstly, Mackenzie's (2005) study on IFG and the language of football commentary is discussed. This journal article is relevant to this thesis in terms of explaining the application of IFG theory to the SAT register of football commentators, and the prominence of holophrastic utterances in their register. Secondly, Müller's monograph on time-critical utterances operating in the syntax of football commentators is elaborated. Thirdly, the commentator's usage of formulaic sequences in terms of metonymic and metaphoric links in different event types is elucidated. Moreover, Callies & Levin's (2019) comparative study on the role of dislocation structures in the SAT is discussed. Finally, Balzer-Siber's (2015) research on functionalistic and stylistic features in the SAT register is deliberated.

Although the works mentioned above can be perceived as pertinent within the studies conducted in the linguistics of football, this chapter aims to utilise and delimit the theories made by the researchers. Accordingly, this chapter aims to remain critical of the findings and ascertain each work's relevance to this thesis.

3.1 Mackenzie (2005)

Mackenzie (2005) provides an insightful study of how certain events in the game influence the syntactic complexity of the commentator. The degree of pressure is concurrent with the events on the pitch, which are categorised as high time pressure, moderate time pressure, low time pressure or no time pressure (113). The events are related to happenings in the match and most often where the ball is at play. Each of the events has a correlation with the syntactic aspect, where Mackenzie observes that time pressure has indeed influenced the complexity and structure of the utterances in the segments of commentary that he analyses (125). Using the aforementioned conventions of IFG analysis, he identified that when the time pressure is high, the lexical material went from the interpersonal level to the phonological level (126). Thus, the utterances of the commentator became less grammatically correct and complete. The data from Mackenzie's study is collected from a BBC commentary on the televised highlights of an English Premier League match from the March 23rd, 2002, between Arsenal FC and Newcastle United:

	Sentential	Clausal	Phrasal	Holophrastic	Total
Introduction	7 (41.2%)	4 (23.5%)	5 (29.4%)	1 (5.9%)	17
Background	2 (9.1%)	**13 (59.1%)**	5 (22.7%)	2 (9.1%)	22
Dead-ball (sec.)	9 (6.1%)	**87 (58.8%)**	36 (24.3%)	16 (10.8%)	148
Dead-ball (prim.)	6 (4.1%)	**30 (46.2%)**	24 (36.9%)	5 (7.7%)	65
Midfield	0	1 (7.1%)	**8 (57.1%)**	5 (35.7%)	14
Summary	0	2 (9.1%)	**16 (72.8%)**	4 (18.2%)	22
Attack/Corner	2 (2.1%)	22 (22.9%)	32 (33.3%)	**40 (41.7%)**	96
Total	26 (6.8%)	159 (41.4%)	126 (32.8%)	73 (21.0%)	384

Table 5: Mackenzie's (2005) Results from Quantitative Analysis (123).

The results from Mackenzie's quantitative analysis of syntactic constraints in the SAT served as an inherent inspiration for this study. As displayed in Table 5 above, Mackenzie categorised different on-pitch events in the left margin and syntactic complexity in the ribbon above. Henceforth, the frequencies of utterances assigned to each event and syntactic category were established. Each event comprises of a hypothesised zero, low, moderate or high time

pressure. Of the different events displayed, Mackenzie (2005) elaborates that the commentator will be under no time pressure when introducing the programme, and low time pressure when giving background information and during dead-ball situations. The dead-ball situations are defined as the sequences when there is no playing action on the pitch. Further, the commentator will be under moderate time pressure during midfield play when there is no direct goal-scoring opportunity. Finally, the commentator will be under high time pressure on corner kicks and attacking plays (122). The syntactic complexity of the commentator's utterances is assigned to either *sentential, clausal, phrasal* or *holophrastic.* Of these, the latter category, the holophrastic formulation, is the most pertinent syntactic element of this study.

Mackenzie (2005) explains the process of identifying holophrastic utterances as: "The category *holophrastic* was applied, in keeping with the discussion above, to discourse acts consisting of only one subact, either of predication or of reference" (122). It is significant in Table 5 that holophrastic formulations were the most prominent syntactic feature applied in events with high time pressure. More precisely, the specific events related to high pressure utterances were corners and attacking plays. The frequency of holophrastic utterances in pressurised events reached a percentage of 41.7% of all syntactic categories in the events with high time pressure. The functions of the holophrastic utterances are also important to consider. In sentences (14) and (15) below, an extract from the commentator's utterances is displayed with an IFG layering analysis. In (14), the move consists of two subacts. The holophrastic utterance represents the first of these subacts as the player Ljungberg consists of only a focused subact of reference, whereas the second consists of two subacts (*robbed* and *by Acuña*) (Mackenzie 120). It is therefore plausible that holophrastic utterances are evident in events with high time pressure and in terms of providing a basis for qualitative analysis of holophrases in IFG manner.

(14) LJUNGberg, ROBBED by Acuña

(15) $(M_1 : (A_1 : (R_1 : Ljungberg)_{Foc}), (A_2: (T_1: robbed)_{Foc} (R_2: Acuña)))$

Mackenzie (120)

Although the IFG layering analysis in (15) displays how one can analyse an utterance produced in real-time, this was not applied to the data of this thesis. This was due to the lack of literature on the guidelines and practices of IFG layering. Although IFG shares a similar armature with FG and FDG, there are significant differences that separate these from each other. In terms of IFG, the emphasis on the holophrase is one to consider in this case. In order to avoid any possible deviations and discrepancies of IFG layering, the approach was simply overshadowed in this study. Despite the exclusion of IFG layering, this study perceives the holophrase as a basis for determining time-pressure in the SAT. Henceforth, the theories of IFG regarding the importance of holophrastic utterances in speech will serve as a basis in this MA thesis.

3.2 Müller (2007)

Müller (2007) contributes to the field of football linguistics with a comprehensive monograph of how time-critical utterances come into play in live SAT of football commentary. It is arguable whether the main focus of his work is based on the SAT, but rather on the operations behind the processes of unplanned language production in extralinguistic realities. The so-called extra-linguistic realities are explained as different events that occur on the football pitch. Equivalently to Mackenzie (2007), Müller categories different on-pitch events. These events are central in his analysis chapter, where he provides syntactic, intonational and formulaic accounts of the commentator's utterances in relation to different events. He suggests three different levels on how to define an event: (a) an "objective" level, (b) the level of perception and (c) the level of verbalisation. Although all levels are vital in the definition of events, Müller demonstrates that "the level on which to define an event, which is most suitable for a study that is interested in how a speaker verbalises immediately what they see, is the level of perception" (76). Thus, there is an inherence on the perception related to the events since humans tend to segment continuous flow of action into units. Moreover, the events depicted by the commentator are hugely influenced by the stereotypical and recurring types of actions throughout a match. It is for that reason Müller (2007) declares that "making use of information that is available through previous knowledge and expectations in this form may also play an important role in event perception" (76). In addition, one can argue that it is expected that the viewer has a certain level of knowledge in terms of the previous and continuous events on the

pitch. If the viewer is not aware of certain rules or the football terminology (kick, shot, pass, dribble etc.), it is likely that certain non-linguistic and linguistic events will be disregarded.

Müller differentiates between what he determines as "description" and "elaboration". Both terms are related to the constraints of the commentator, that is, especially related to time pressure. "Description" is the linguistic characteristics of the commentator when there is a significant time pressure, and the commentator describes the actions, events and situations that can be seen at the moment of speaking (Müller 185). An important term related to unplanned speech in continuous events is the on-line description. The term is defined by Müller (2007) as "the beginning of an utterance occurred within 18 frames (720 milliseconds) of the end of the event in question" (185). In simpler terms, on-line descriptions are verbalised when or shortly after the events occur. On the other hand, the commentator's utterances can be defined as "elaboration" when there is lower time pressure. Among the characteristic events that promote elaboration commentary are dead-ball situations, that is, when the ball is out of play and there are no on-pitch events occurring. Other events that promote elaboration would be when there are certain inactive periods of play in the match. The term "off-line" is used when an utterance is regarded as more than 18 frames after the corresponding event (Müller 187). As a result of the non-pressurised events, the commentator is more likely to construct more syntactically advanced sentences as opposed to when there are rapid sequences of events. In this way, Müller affirms the inherence of events and syntactic constraints in terms of the linguistic pressure of the commentator.

Moreover, Müller argues that it is expected that commentators memorise certain phrases and develop narrative strategies not only to make it easier for the viewer, but also to be able to keep up with the game. His claim is in agreement with Ferguson (1983) and Mackenzie (2005) in that formulaic sequences and prefabricated routines are indeed existent in the SAT. More precisely, he argues that commentators "develop strategies of associating certain recurring stereotypical events with certain linguistic structures or items, [...] to speed up the retrieval of linguistic form for verbalization" (157). Furthermore, the produced strategies of formulae can be uttered in instances of high time pressure, that is, the on-line utterances.

In Müller's study, radio commentary in combination with videotapes of football matches were used to establish the correlation between the commentator's utterances and events. One can therefore argue Müller's procedure is not comparable to the data collection of

this MA thesis. This is because this thesis makes use of live television commentary. Although his findings in football radio commentary are indeed innovative within the field of SAT research, it is important to note that there are stylistic differences between the radio genre and the television genre of commentary. This is due to the visual aspect that the commentator and viewer share. Because of this, the TV commentator is not restricted to the similar level of descriptiveness as opposed to the radio commentator. For instance, the TV commentator needs only to mention a player's name when he is holding possession of the ball. In radio commentary, there is an expectancy to provide a more detailed description of the events on the pitch. As opposed to the TV commentator, the radio commentator must thus mention the actions of the player in addition to the name. However, Müller's description of the presence of the commentator's prefabricated linguistic routines in high time pressure is a fundamental concept for this MA thesis.

3.3 Levin (2008)

The role of semi-fixed phrases and formulaic sequences in the SAT of football commentary were discerned by Levin (2008), with the incentive of investigating their functions in the register. The outset for his work is that there had been a growing realisation language largely consists of fixed or semi-fixed strings of words that adhere to one another, instead of words complying to the syntactic rules (Levin 143). Levin (2008) argues that these fixed phrases are to be considered as formulaic language and as register markers. The data collection in his work was collected from an online interface by Fletcher 2003/2004 containing a myriad of phrases in English. In addition, the material was collected from the British National Corpus with additional material from the Independent on CD-ROM (Levin 144). His research aims were as follows:

(i) to explore frequent phrases containing the words *net, minute(s)* and *whistle*
occurring in play-by-play commentary and match reports;
(ii) to examine the role of metaphor and metonymy in the creation of football-related
phraseology;
(iii) to investigate the functions, use, fixedness and variability of formulaic sequences in
football reporting

As (i) entailed, there is an intention from Levin (2008) to investigate phrases including the words *net, minute(s)* and *whistle.* The predicament for the selection of these words are merely based on intuition due to the word's prominence in the register of football. In (16), (17) and (18), utterances from the commentators from the matches used in this study are presented with usage of the aforementioned words in Levin's n-gram analysis.:

(16) `Trent Alexander-Arnold, I think, tried to kick the ball in the` **`net.`** (Appendix 2, lines 71-72)

(17) `Lindelöf rushing up at the last` **`minute`** (Appendix 2, line 891)

(18) **`Final whistle`** `has been waiting for a long time, there it goes.` (Appendix 1, line 1088)

As is evident in (ii), Levin (2008) aims to examine the role of metaphor and metonymy in the match reports. His predicament for the examination of these is the claim that these are found to be pervasive in human language. More precisely, the implementation of metaphors and metonymy in language contributes to the perception of one being linguistically competent. In order to understand their function in language, it is vital to differentiate between the two terms. Levin (2008) argues that the function of a metaphor is to understand and experience one type of word in terms of another. The abstract concept of time is inherent in the understanding of a metaphor, in that it can be conceptualised as a moving object (e.g. *the time for action has arrived*) (Levin 146). Moreover, the concept of metonymy has the contrasting effect in that it can be described as making one entity stand for another (e.g., the face can stand for the person) (Levin 146). An understanding of the metaphoric and metonymic concepts of the SAT will thus facilitate both the viewer's understanding of the game, and also contribute to the richness of the commentator's speech.

Levin (2008) suggests that in football, culturally significant situations can be characterised as the events of goal scoring and measuring time, thus making formulaic more likely to be used with reference to these events in football reporting (146). His large-scale corpus allowed him to look for certain words using the n-gram tool to find patterns of formulaic

usage across multiple football reports. Although his methodology and findings are inspirational for this study, the process of analysing formulaic sequences will be approached differently. This is namely due to the demarcation of data, as this study utilised two matches for analysis. However, Levin's (2008) findings on the usage of metaphors and metonymy in goal scoring events serve as useful data for this study. The incentive of this study is thus to investigate formulaic language use in high pressure events, specifically goal-scoring events, to discern how these are used and to assume their routine customs.

3.4 Callies & Levin (2019)

A recurring linguistic factor in the SAT of a football commentator is the prevalence of dislocation as a register feature. Due to this recurrence, Callies & Levin (2019) provides a comprehensive study on the usage of dislocation structures in English, German and Swedish live football commentary. The data for this study was collected from the 2014 men's football FIFA World Cup final between Germany and Argentina. The overt incentive behind their research was indeed that the feature is omnipresent in the SAT register. However, they also argue that the feature is neglected in research within the field of football linguistics: "While some characteristic syntactic features of live sports reporting were examined in previous studies, dislocation as a key feature of this register had been largely overlooked" (Callies & Levin 266). It is therefore essential to investigate the usage of dislocation structures, such as fronting and extraposition, with the incentive of displaying how commentators structure their discourse and convey information to the viewers.

A possible definition of the register feature is provided in the article: "dislocation involves a definite noun phrase (NP) occurring in 'peripheral' position with a co-referential pronoun in the core of the clause" (Callies & Levin 254). More precisely, the position of the NP is either located to the left or to the right of the co-referential pronoun. Due to this dissimilarity, one differs between the terms right (RD) and left dislocation (LD). Examples of both instances' dislocation from the corpus from Callies & Levin's study are displayed below:

English right dislocation

(19) Well, **they** had a rocky few minutes, **Germany**, but they've seem to have gotten their rhythm back at the moment.

English left dislocation
(20) And **Hummels**, **he**'s just trailing in his wake.

<div align="right">Callies & Levin (254)</div>

In (19) above, *Germany* serves as the NP of the sentence and is dislocated to the right. The pronoun *they* refers to Germany and appears in a sentence-initial position, or canonical position. Accordingly, *they* refers to *Germany*. One can perceive the following example of the right-dislocated sentence in its canonical form as: *Germany had a rocky few minutes, but they seem to have gotten their rhythm back at the moment*.

In example (20) above, the same syntactic inversion from example (19) is evident, although in a different order. The utterance of the player "Hummels" operates as a NP and is dislocated to the left of the sentence. Moreover, the pronoun "he" refers to Hummels and is used in its canonical position. The syntactic structure of the sentence in a canonical form could be: *And he's* (or *Hummels is*) *just trailing in his wake*.

Although Callies & Levin (2019) assert the presence of dislocation in the SAT of football commentary, one might speculate what discourse functions they contribute with in the register. Callies & Levin (2019) present three possible functions of RD due to the dominating findings of that variant in their data. The three discourse functions of RD are thus (1) resolving referential ambiguity (RA), (2) emphasis and (3) a function labelled "add on" (Callies & Levin 259). RA can be defined as when there is "an ambiguity caused by mismatch of verbal commentary and action/image shown on screen" (Callies & Levin 259). More precisely, if an utterance from the commentator is focused on a certain player and the TV picture would switch to something else, the commentator would be inclined to dislocate the player's name in order to provide clarity for the viewers. An example of this could be that a pronoun was utilised in a NP of an action performed by that player. Abruptly, the TV picture changes to something else, and the commentator would utter the player's name to avoid uncertainty on the matter. It is therefore arguable that the commentator's obligation of resolving RA can be due to the unplanned nature of the SAT. The second discourse function of RD is emphasis. The referent

in RD's that include and emphasis are "characterised by being stressed and by the emotional involvement of the speaker" (Callies & Levin 264). Hitherto, these instances function as giving extra attention to a certain action or player. The last discourse function in RD's was the "add-on". The main difference between discourse function emphasis and add-on was that the latter is "unstressed and lacking emotional involvement" (Callies & Levin 264). In simpler terms, the add-on operates as a confirmatory function where the commentator simply adds information to the referent.

The findings from Callies & Levin's study suggest that there is a significant distinction between the usage of RD and LD in all three corpora. The common finding in all three corpora is that the presence of RD is far more prevalent compared to the usage of LD. In that sense, it is possible to discern that RD is a definite register feature "as regards to pervasiveness and frequency" (Callies & Levin 258). However, the usage of LD in the corpora turns out to be quite rare, which limits their further discussion on the matter. Callies & Levin's (2019) study on the usage of RD and LD in the SAT of football commentary is relevant to this MA thesis as it aims to investigate the unplanned nature of the speech of football commentators. Moreover, dislocation findings in this MA thesis are matched in terms of the simultaneous events that occur on the pitch under speech production. The findings relate the on-pitch events with the usage of dislocations and their respective discourse functions.

3.5 Balzer-Siber (2015)

Balzer-Siber (2015) analyses the functional and stylistic features of the play-by-play and colour commentator. The data for his study are six 20-minute transcriptions of televised football commentary in the American Major Soccer League. Balzer-Siber bases his analysis on DeNu's (2010) argumentation about the inclusion of a colour-commentator. More precisely, DeNu (2010 argues that "American announcers tend to feel compelled to fill every available minute with verbiage" (258). The definition of announcers in this case represents the meaning of a play-by-play commentator. This obligation to avoid periods of silence in live broadcast commentary contributed to the implementation of a secondary commentator that could not only have a communicative purpose, but also avoid moments without reporting. The research

conducted in this work was a discourse analysis of the SAT register and how particular linguistic features operate in their talk. One of the distinctive linguistic features discussed in his work is the prevalence of subject and copula deletion during live action announcing (30). Examples from Balzer-Biber's analysis of these linguistic phenomena are listed in sentences (21) and (22) below. In (21), the subject pronoun *he* is omitted as well as the articles *is* and *it's*. Moreover, cases of subject deletion and missing conjunctions are evident in sentence (22) (Balzer-Siber 29). Using the theoretical concepts from Ferguson (1983), Balzer-Siber (2015) refers to the occurrence of deletion as linguistic simplification.

(21) Here's Higuaín (.) [he's] having a drop back to find possession as we expected and the Galaxy [is] able to clear it away, [it's] Keane now for the Galaxy.
(22) Mike Magee (..) put this for Chicago (...) Amarikwa (.) [is on the] near side (.) [he's] able to take this, Quincy Amarikwa touches into the eighteen, Fire get numbers up, [they/and] drop back in, Harri Shipp fakes one shot, [he/and] walks it across.

Balzer-Siber (29)

Balzer-Siber's work on the functional and stylistic features of SAT is relevant to demonstrate in this MA thesis. This is due to its singularity within the field of recent studies of the SAT, which is rather scarce. However, it is important to note that there are significant register differences in the SAT of American and British commentators. Balzer-Siber (2015) declares that: "British announcers – as much as other European ones – are said to let the game speak for itself at times" (21). To let the game speak for itself means that the commentator does not feel obligated to fill in every moment with speech. It is therefore important to note that British commentators, who were analysed in this study, are likely to include several stretches of silence in their SAT.

Another linguistic aspect analysed by Balzer-Siber (2015) was the prevalence of deictic *here, there* and *now* operating as signposting devices in the SAT. In the extracted sentences (28), (29), (30) below, a case of each of the aforestated deictic expressions are displayed. Balzer-Siber (2015) argues that the commentator's utilisation of signposting devices when referring to specific moments, actions, or events in the match (42). Examples of how deictic expressions are used by the commentator are displayed below:

(28) Gordon is fouled here outside his own penalty area (..) and Hilario Grajeda is gonna have a little discussion here with Felipe, yellow card

(29) Poor choice by Landon Donovan there (.) best decision for him there (.) taking yourself and have a shot there right outside the eighteen

(30) here's Gordon now for the Galaxy (..) Zardes (...) working out of the back now, Leonardo and Rogers

(Balzer-Siber 41)

In sum, the case of subject and copula deletion is relevant to the analysis in this MA thesis. However, simplification will not be utilised as a term when analysing deletion in the SAT of British Premier League commentators. As discussed in section 2.4.3, restrictions in syntax will adhere to the conventions of IFG and holophrastic utterances. However, it is arguable that simplification and holophrastic utterances are similar in functions, as they occur when there are rapid succession of events and when the commentator is under significant time-pressure. Altogether, the SAT simplification of Balzer-Siber's study is regarded as useful as the study is based on analysing syntactic restrictions. Moreover, his analysis of deictic expressions is deemed relevant for this MA thesis. However, this MA thesis aims its focus of *here* with a different approach. Herein, the utilisation of contraction *here's* was analysed, which was omnipresent in one of the extracted sentences from Balzer-Siber's work, although neglected in his study.

4 Material and Methodology

The material selected for the analysis of this research are two football matches from the British Premier League. As mentioned in section 2.5.2, the specific matches utilised are Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC on October 24th, 2021, and Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United on April 19th, 2022. The verbiage of the primary and secondary commentators was dictated and converted to full two transcriptions. The transcriptions are therefore inherent for this MA thesis, as it operated as a corpus to find elements of discussion (see Appendices).

4.1 Material: The Matches

As asserted in section 2.5.2, the selected matches for this study were both fixtures between Manchester United and Liverpool FC in the British Premier League 2021/2022 season. Table 6 below provides a description of each match including event, venue, TV station and commentators in both respective matches. The matches were selected with an incentive of conducting a comparative analysis with regards to syntactic constraints and their relation to time pressure.

Match	Event	Venue	Day of recording	TV Station	Commentators (role)
Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC	Premier League	Old Trafford, Manchester, England	October 24th 2021	Sky Sports	Martin Tyler (1st) Gary Neville (2nd) Jamie Carragher (2nd)
Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United	Premier League	Anfield, Liverpool, England	April 19th 2022	Sky Sports	Martin Tyler (1st) Gary Neville (2nd) Jamie Carragher (2nd)

Table 6: The Selected Matches

Table 7 below presents both the final result and the xG of the aforestated matches. The xG numbers were collected from understat.com, which is a website providing detailed xG statistics from numerous football leagues in the world. As mentioned in section 2.5.2, a reason for selecting these matches was the significant distinction in xG despite a considerably similar final result. As mentioned in section 2.5.1, the overall xG numbers of a match indicate both the quality and quantity shots. One can therefore argue that the numbers give an impression of the matches' chances and the probabilities of the chances ending up as goals.

Match	Result	xG
Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC	0-5	5.41
Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United	4-0	2.37

Table 7: The xG of the Selected Matches

4.2 Data Collection

An initial intention for collecting data was to pursue the same procedure of Mackenzie (2005), who categorised the different levels of syntactic complexity with the events of the match. As elaborated in section 3.1, each event was linked to a certain degree of time pressure, and it was further possible to discern whether the commentator was under significant pressure or not. To follow this categorical approach in this MA thesis proved to be a complicated matter. It is important to note that Mackenzie (2005) utilised an extended highlights reel from one football match for his analysis. The material in this thesis is at a larger scale, in which two full match coverages were analysed. It was therefore inherent to ascertain which data collection methods were relevant to apply for this MA thesis. Rather than categorising every sequence of defensive, midfield and attacking play in the matches, the event type "shots" was considered. The justification for analysing the syntax of the commentators in the event type "shots" was due to its significance to the xG numbers. As mentioned in section 2.5.1, the quality and quantity of shots influence the xG number. An issue with the total xG number of a match is that it does not always correspond with the accumulated xG from each individual shot. A reason for this is described by fBref.com (2021), in that when there are numerous chances, the xG

might indicate a number larger than 1, which is a definite goal. In this sense, the xG might indicate insufficient numbers with regard to the actual probabilities of a goal. It is therefore important to note that the sum of the xG of each shot in a match is not always representable in terms of the total xG of a match. This will be explained in section 5.1.1, where holophrastic utterances are compared with xG numbers.

One of the research questions for this MA thesis is whether the syntax of a football commentator is more or less restricted in matches with a high xG compared to matches with low xG. As explained in section 2.4.3, the holophrastic utterances are considered to be markers of restricted syntax in IFG terms. Therefore, the approach for collecting data was to count each holophrastic utterance that was made from the commentator in the build-up to a shot. Finding every shot in the match was made advantageous using ESPN's detailed reports from both matches[2]. The method for finding each shot was facilitated by viewing a written match report and watching the match footage on BCE Sportflix. The utterances of the commentator in the sequences of shots were marked in the transcriptions with the shot number and the minute they occurred. Following this procedure facilitated the process of collecting data for the quantitative and qualitative analysis.

4.3 Transcription Conventions

The applied method for the data collection was to transcribe every utterance from all commentators in both matches. Importantly, the transcriptions of both matches are found in the Appendices. The transcription from the match between Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC on October 24th, 2021, will from hereon be referred to as Appendix 1. Moreover, the transcription from the commentators in the match between Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United on April 19th, 2022, will be referred to as Appendix 2. The transcriptions adhered to certain conventions of Conversation Analysis (CA). Sidnell (2009) affirms that CA does not take "language per se as its focus but rather the practical activities in which language (along with gesture, gaze and other aspects of bodily comportment) is deployed, that is, talk-in-interaction"

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[2]   Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC 0-5 https://www.espn.com/soccer/commentary?gameId=605952

Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United 4-0 https://www.espn.com/soccer/commentary?gameId=605746

(8). Although this study primarily aims its focus on the language of the football commentators, one can argue that it is relevant to utilise CA as the chosen convention of transcription. This is due to the interplay between the play-by-play commentator and colour-commentator(s). Although, a majority of the linguistic output of a football match broadcast derives from the play-by-play commentator, there are numerous instances where there is conversational turn-taking between the commentators. This is prompted by Mondada (2018), who argues that there are research benefits of audio-video transcriptions as "the focus on situated actions entails the audio-video recording of interactions in their social context, without being orchestrated by the researcher and in a minimally invasive way" (100). The social context can be transferred to the extra-linguistic activities that unfold on the football pitch. Therefore, transcriptions are "particularly careful in representing the emergent, incremental, situated and contingent unfolding of action in time" (Mondada 101). As this study aims to converge the actions of the football match and the speech of the commentator, the inclusion of the transcriptions was vital in this MA thesis.

There were some definite limitations in the transcription procedure, as is elaborated further in section 4.3.1 below. This entails that some elements and conventions of transcriptions were omitted. The omissions of CA included the temporal and sequential relationships and the aspects of speech delivery and intonation. The underlying reason for excluding these aspects were primarily twofold. Firstly, there was a lack of relevance for taking every aspect into account due to the scope of this study. Although intonational prominence has some relevance in regard to holophrastic utterances and formulaic language, as is conferred in section 5.2.1 and section 5.2.2, the incentive of pursuing this procedure throughout the whole transcription was regarded as inconvenient. Secondly, a manual procedure of transcription adhering to the aforestated aspects would have been time-consuming. As section 4.4.2 discusses, the transcriptions of the two matches contain an extensive 21.804 tokens. Therefore, the procedure of adhering to the aforestated conventions of CA would be regarded as both too comprehensive and unnecessary due to the scope of this thesis.

The conventions that were considered in the transcriptions of Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 were primarily related to unintelligibility and turn-taking. In the transcription process, there were several instances where there were difficulties with comprehending the speech of either play-by-play commentator or colour commentators. Notably, this issue occurred far more frequently in the linguistic output of Martin Tyler, the play-by-play commentator. Sidnell

(2009) provides a solution to this issue in that "empty parentheses indicate that something is being said, but no hearing (or, in some cases, speaker identification) can be achieved" (xvii). Therefore, with the aim of resolving this issue, unintelligible utterances were marked with "()" throughout both appendices. Moreover, another convention included in the transcriptions was the inclusion of the speaker's initials. Utilising this approach facilitated the process of differentiating the linguistic output of the commentators. In addition, the inclusion of the commentators' initials simplified the process of analysing the communicative functions of the commentators, which is further examined in section 6.5.

4.3.1 Transcription Procedure

The procedure of transcription was to record the audio of both matches using a mobile phone. Further, the audio was uploaded and automatically transcribed using the web version of Microsoft Word. Although this method was effective in terms of avoiding writing the transcription manually, there was still a need for editing. Therefore, the text of the transcriptions was corresponding with the broadcast of the matches, and then carefully edited and revised. By pursuing this procedure, the verbalisations of the commentators became more representable in terms of what was actually being verbalised.

4.4 Research Design

4.4.1 Mixed Methods Approach

This MA thesis employs a mixed method approach to apprehend the data. A mixed methods approach consists of both a quantitative and a qualitative method. Angouri (2010) argues "that combining the two paradigms is beneficial for constructing comprehensive accounts and providing answers to a wider range of research questions" (31). Not being restricted to only one method of data analysis, either the quantitative or qualitative method, can therefore open new doors in terms of answering more definitive research questions. In addition, employing

this approach can elucidate a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions at hand.

The benefits of using both quantitative and qualitative methods in this MA thesis are manifold. The use of both approaches is justified by the facets of the mixed methods approach by Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) in that "there are two types of research questions, two types of data (numerical and textual) and that there are two types of data analysis (statistical and thematic)" (4). The quantitative method facilitated the comparative analysis of the commentators' holophrastic usage in the two matches. Thus, the demarcations of holophrastic frequencies of the two matches are displayed candidly, which further assist the progress of analysing differences in holophrastic usage. In addition, the utilisation of the quantitative approach facilitated the portrayal of frequencies of multi-word chunks in both of the transcriptions. As discussed in section 4.4.2, there was an incentive of constructing a corpus which facilitated the process of extracting data.

One can argue that the mixed methods approach in this study may be characterised as a methodological triangulation. Angouri (2010) argues that the term depicts the usage of different methods that will eventually provide similar results and hence allow for confidential interpretation (34). Indeed, the prevalence of holophrastic utterances, time expressions and deictic *here* were discussed using a quantitative approach. However, time expressions were not included in the qualitative findings. The omission was due to the incentive of only presenting the frequency the recurrent 3-4 grams, and not analysing their functions of usage *per se*. Moreover, the results from the formulaic language in goal-scoring events and dislocation structures were only presented in the qualitative findings. This was due to the inclination of analysing their idiosyncratic functions, which was inconceivable when utilising a quantitative approach.

4.4.2 Creating a Corpus

According to Stubbs (2007): "Corpus data and methods provide new ways of studying the relations between language system and language use" (127). With the intention of having the possibility of facilitating the process of analysing the data material, it was thus desirable to create a corpus for this study. In order to create an apt corpus, the concordance program

AntConc MacOS 10/11 (4.2.0) (Anthony, 2022)[3] was used with the purpose of analysing syntactic and formulaic patterns in the SAT. AntConc is a useful tool for linguists and researchers to analyse and create corpora. When utilising this tool, the user is granted the possibility of analysing the syntax and patterns of language within a corpus. The corpora for this study were indeed the transcriptions from the match between Manchester United and Liverpool FC on the 24th of October 2021 and the match between Liverpool FC and Manchester United on April 19th, 2022. The initials of the commentators were removed from the transcriptions with the incentive of only including elements of speech in the corpora. Furthermore, two corpora were constructed, that is, Appendix 1 representing the former match, and Appendix 2 representing the latter match. Appendix 1 included a total of 11,890 tokens, and Appendix 2 contained a total of 9,914 tokens. In total, the collected corpora of the two matches provided a number of 21,804 tokens.

The approach for analysing the corpus using AntConc in this study was copious. To investigate the multi word chunks, the N-gram function was utilised. This function provided the frequencies and co-occurrences of contiguous sequences in the transcriptions. Moreover, the function Keyword in Context (KWIC) was utilised to examine the context of the n-gram findings. This function was helpful in the process of investigating the syntactic aspects of the multi word chunks in a larger picture.

4.4.3 Comparative Corpus

An incentive in the investigation of routine phrases in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 was to establish whether they could be regarded as standardised in football reports. To pursue this incentive, the addition of a comparative corpus was included. The comparative interface corpus database utilised in this study is called Phrases in English (PIE) from Fletcher (2004/2003). As discussed in section 3.3, Levin (2008) utilised the same corpus for his study on metaphoric and metonymic links in football match reports. Levin (2008) described that the PIE was based on the British National Corpus (BNC), which consists of 90 million words of written English and 10 million words of spoken English (144). It is arguable that the PIE corpus is outdated and

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[3] https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/ Accessed 15th January.

lacks relevance to serve as a comparative corpus to this thesis. In addition, it is debatable whether there is a demarcation between live football commentary and football reports. Lewandowski (2012) explains the difference of the two as the register of live football commentary as "reporting of the unfolding action on the field of play followed by analysis and interpretation" (32). On the other hand, the register of football reports can be defined as "written with the benefit of hindsight, published in newspapers or online" (32).

Although football commentary and football reports provide narratives of football matches in different ways, one can argue that there are familiar aspects between the two. Lewandowski (2012) argues that although all football language registers are marked by distinctive features of discourse, "what all of the identified varieties share is a common terminological core" (32). It is therefore plausible to assume that when analysing terms and phrases, the two register variations are applicable for comparative analysis. In that sense, the PIE was utilised to look for terms and phrases found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 in order to establish the prevalence of usage in football reports. Accordingly, this process was pursued when investigating formulaic language in goal-scoring events, which is elaborated further in chapter 5.

4.4.4 Identifying Holophrastic Utterances

The process of identifying holophrastic usage in the SAT was essential with the aims of studying syntactic constraints in high time pressure events. Identifying and counting frequencies of holophrastic utterances in this study was an intricate procedure. This was due to the lack of clear definitions and examples in the literature. In addition, there is a lack of research conducted with the notion of holophrastic utterances functioning as register features. As aforementioned in section 3.1, the research by Mackenzie (2005) can be perceived as the most unique within this field. Although the study provides an IFG analysis of a certain number of sentences, there is a lack of a complete transcription of the commentators' utterances. It was therefore unfeasible to review the individual holophrastic utterances that were displayed in his quantitative analysis. Henceforth, the lack of a complete transcription in Mackenzie's study was therefore an obstacle when the aims for this MA thesis was to equate the process of identifying holophrastic utterances.

Although there were issues related to the collection of holophrastic utterances in the two matches for this study, the matter was resolved when adhering to the IFG conventions of holophrastic application. Mackenzie (2005) explains that "in IFG, each discourse act consists of at least one *subact*, including – crucially – the focal subact that represents the core of what the speaker intends to communicate" (118). In this way, the focal subact in holophrasis conveys the meaning of the short utterance. Moreover, Mackenzie (2005) asserts that the focal subact is represented by either one of predication of reference. In (23) and (24) below, holophrastic utterances with a subact of predication and of reference are provided from the transcriptions from the matches utilised for this study.

(23) **`Wan-Bissaka,`** `got his challenge in that time.` (Appendix 1 line 112)

(24) `Last passage of play,` **`a corner`**`.` (Appendix 2, 896-897)

The sentence in (23) consists of one move with two discourse acts. The discourse act is "Wan-Bissaka", who is a defender at Manchester United. "Wan-Bissaka" operates as the Focus of the utterance due to its initial position of utterance and prominence in intonation. In addition, it also serves as a holophrastic utterance with a subact of reference. It is a referent due to the commentator referring to an action by the player, and thus uses the player's name to indicate a focus on the actions of that specific player. In (24), however, the holophrastic utterance "a corner" is represented with a focal subact of predication. This is due to its function of serving as a predication for the first discourse act within the sentence, that is, the "last passage of play". In this holophrastic formulation, there are two words "a" and "corner". As mentioned in section 2.4.3, the normative perception of a holophrastic utterance is that it only consists of one word representing one meaning. This is not the case in (23), where the article "a" merely serves as a grammatical constituent to "corner". Altogether, the two words represent one meaning, that is, that one team has a corner-kick. The same notion of holophrastic utterances consisting of more than one word is described by Mackenzie (2005) with the sense of Wray (2002) that: "each of these is a ready-made sequence of words that can be used as a whole with a single function in the discourse" (124). These units are therefore formulaic since one can retrieve the string of words from memory directly to the phonological level. Thus, the identification of holophrastic

utterances in this study adhered to the requirement of only consisting of one subact but could also consist of more than one word if this word was a constituent of one meaning.

Another important factor that was considered in the process of identifying the holophrastic utterances was the timing of the commentator. This study analysed the holophrastic usage of the commentators in events that led up to a shot. It was therefore inherent to set boundaries as to when the commentator's utterance was in accordance with the events on the pitch. To overcome this conundrum, the theory of Müller's (2007) on-line and off-line references were considered as vital. As elaborated in chapter 3, utterances that were on-line could be considered as a simultaneous description of the occurring events. This is due to the 720 millisecond requirement of narration after the event. On-line utterances were thus the only ones utilised in the analysis of holophrastic usage due to the inclination of relating the linguistic output with the event type "shot". Utterances that were considered off-line were not utilised in the study, because these were not corresponding with the ongoing events.

4.5 Validity and Reliability

Whether the findings of this study are representative to operate as standardised for the SAT in football is debatable. As previously asserted, usage of formulaic expressions differs from commentator to commentator. Indeed, this applies for the correlation between syntax and events on the pitch. Each commentator has a different linguistic outset and method of acquiring linguistic routines. It is therefore essential to establish that football commentary is an individual practice, and while some linguistic elements are recurring in the speech of several commentators, one cannot assume that these are standardised.

4.5.1 Validity and Limitations of Material

An initial incentive of this study was to analyse the SAT register of commentators from the match with the highest and lowest xG in the 2021/2022 Premier League season. The incentive was deemed too complex as there was lacking availability of material. The BCE Sportflix archive only offered a handful of matches from the stated season, and the match with the highest and lowest xG were not posted in the archive. In addition, it is arguable that applying

linguistic data from only two matches is inadequate and cannot be perceived as sufficient in terms of conducting a quantitative analysis. However, the selected matches for this study were purposefully chosen for numerous reasons. Firstly, the results from both matches are relatively similar, although contrasting in xG. The difference of xG yields for an enticing analysis to discern whether formulaic expressions and syntactic restrictions in the two matches differ to a high degree or not. Secondly, the linguistic output of the commentators is similar due to the presence of Martin Tyler, Gary Neville, and Jamie Carragher in both matches. In addition, all three commentators were asserted to the same role in both matches: Martin Tyler as the play-by-play commentator, and Gary Neville and Jamie Carragher as colour commentators. Thirdly, a comparative linguistic analysis with the same fixture between two teams within the contemporary season can be perceived as a unique approach because it is non-existing within the field of SAT research.

Another limitation for this MA thesis was the deficient number of research within the field of IFG. Due to its position as a subtheory of FG and FDG, there is a small number of research done within the adherence of IFG. The aforementioned work of Mackenzie (2005) is unique in regard to this, where his analysis of the relation between usage of holophrastic utterances and high-time pressure events was unrivalled in this case. Hitherto, Mackenzie's work stood alone within the field of applying IFG theory to the SAT of football commentators. It was therefore important to discern that in this MA thesis, certain elements from the conventions of IFG were applied while other conventions were neglected. Of the conventions applied, the presence of holophrastic utterances consisting of only one subact and operating as a marker of syntactic restriction will be addressed. However, the perception of right and left dislocations as "misnomers of IFG" (Mackenzie 117) was disregarded.

4.5.2 Validity of Method

Although the two matches utilised for this study were selected by the researcher for reasons mentioned in section 4.5.1, the methods used in this study were approached with the aims of conducting an authentic study without any notions of researcher's bias. As mentioned in section 4.4.4, it was inherent to explain how the collection of holophrastic utterances was conducted, due to its limited research in the SAT register. In order to conduct a comparative analysis, every

shot's respective xG numbers were included in the tables. By doing this, a credible comparative justification would be possible to discern. Moreover, the utilisation of the PIE corpus was deemed an inherent addition, as it included a large set of comparative material. The quantitative analysis conducted in this thesis provided a general basis for the findings in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. Moreover, the qualitative approach delved more into the usages of the aforestated linguistic phenomena which were elaborated in further detail. The aim of the qualitative approach was to ascertain the distributions of holophrastic utterances and formulaic language in high time pressure events, and to regard whether the findings from the most frequent phrases had any relations to time pressure. Lastly, the presence of dislocation structures was also elaborated and linked to the element of time pressure.

Although the stated linguistic phenomena and methods provided an interesting study in the field of SAT research, one can still ague that there were discrepancies. As discussed in section 6.5, this thesis did not conduct a quantitative study of the total frequencies of dislocation structures. It focused rather on elaborating their operation in conjunction with both communicative and discoursal functions. One can therefore argue that if a quantitative approach related to the total usage of dislocation structures was pursued, other findings could have been discerned and discussed.

4.5.3 Hypotheses

Before the transcription process was initiated, a couple of hypotheses were constructed to predict possible outcomes of the study. Similarly to Mackenzie (2005) and Müller (2007), a central hypothesis to this study was that the play-by-play commentator was under significant high time pressure during attacking play. In these events, the commentator was restricted to use more minimal utterances in this phase of play compared to others. It was assumed that the commentator was not pressured as much during midfield play and defensive play. The pressure in attacking plays was due to the ongoing and unexpected events on the pitch (see Figure 2, section 5.1.1). Thus, the commentator has the task of narrating the match aptly when there is significant time pressure. Further, another hypothesis of this study was that the commentator was more restricted in syntax in a match with a higher xG compared to a match with a lower xG. As elaborated in section 2.5.1, the framework of xG discerned both the frequency and the

quality of shots in a match. In simpler terms, matches with higher xG are likely to include events that put significant pressure on the commentator. It was therefore likely that the commentator will be more syntactically restricted in phases of play that occur goalmouth.

It was assumed that shots represented the events that evoked the most time pressure in the SAT of football commentators. Therefore, a hypothesis for this thesis was that the shots with a higher xG would correspond to a high frequency rate of holophrastic utterances. This process would be possible when analysing the utterances related to the shots with the highest xG numbers. In correlation with the aforestated hypothesis, another prediction for this study was that there would be a significant prevalence of holophrastic utterances in goal-scoring events. This was because the chance resulted in a goal and therefore the events leading up to this must have influenced the commentator in terms of time pressure. More precisely, the commentator would be inclined to minimise his utterances due to the succession of ongoing events and therefore utilise holophrastic formulations as opposed to clausal formulations. Another hypothesis was that the commentator would produce more metonymic links as opposed to metaphoric links in goal scoring scenarios. This hypothesis was based on the findings from Levin (2008) which was elaborated in section 3.3. Whereas the usage of metonymy was prominent in goal scoring events, the usage of metaphors was evident in utterances concerning time. This hypothesis was determined to have similar outcomes in this study, although the dataset was of a smaller scale.

The aforestated hypotheses were indeed considered when analysing the data from Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. However, it is important to note that although there were numerous hypotheses taken into consideration before the data collection process initiated, there was an underlying intention of avoiding researcher's bias. Furthermore, to discern if the constructed hypotheses were actualised in the data, chapter 5 provided the findings of this study.

5 Findings

5.1 Quantitative Findings

The quantitative results of this study are provided in tables with frequencies of occurrences of different syntactic aspects in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. More precisely, the quantitative findings presented the frequency and usage of holophrastic utterances, formulaic language, discourse deixis and dislocation in the SAT of play-by-play and colour commentators in the two matches. As elaborated in section 4.4.2, the concordance program AntConc was an essential tool in the data collection process. AntConc was used specifically when collecting frequencies of multi-word chunks and usage of deictic *here*. Moreover, the collection of holophrastic utterances and formulaic language in event type "goals" was conducted manually using the transcriptions in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

5.1.1 Holophrastic Frequency in Event Type "Shots" in Relation to xG

As mentioned in chapter 4, the holophrastic utterances were counted in adherence with the IFG definition of a holophrastic utterance. The underlying factor to determine an utterance as holophrastic was whether its focal subact was of either reference or of predication. If the supposed holophrastic utterance contained either of these subacts, it was considered holophrastic. Another inherent factor in the data collection process was to determine when the speech of the commentator was related to the event. The parts of speech that were considered in the data collection were when the commentator narrated the ongoing events that eventually led up to the shot.

Tables 8 and 10 below display the frequencies of holophrastic utterances in the event type "shots" in the selected matches for this study. In the left column, all frequencies of shots from the match are listed. Following the frequencies of shots, the number of holophrastic utterances and its percentage of frequency are presented. In the last column to the right, the xG number of each number of shots is shown. The xG numbers in bold represent the shots that resulted in goals. The xG statistics of the individual shots from the match are collected from

understat.com[4]. This website provides results and in-game statistics from numerous football matches in the world and was therefore vital in the data collecting process in this study. The inclusion of the xG number for each individual shot made it easier to investigate the xG's correlation with the commentator's holophrastic usage. Moreover, the line between shots 20 and 21 in Table 8, and the line between shots 9 and 10 in Table 10, indicate the half-time break in the football matches. With the incentive of contrast between the data in the different halves, Tables 9 and 11 below displayed the difference in holophrastic usage in each respective half.

As previously asserted, Table 8 below showed the frequencies of holophrastic utterances in the event type "shots" in the match between Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC on October 24th, 2021. The overall frequencies of holophrastic utterances from this match were 37 times out of 31 shots. This number equalled an average of 1.2 holophrastic utterances per shot, which gave the impression that the presence of approximately holophrastic utterance for each shot. A notable finding in the results of Table 8 was that the prevalence of holophrastic utterances occurred in 13 of the total 31 shots. This aberration proved that the commentator used holophrastic utterances in 35% of the total shots. Moreover, shot number 9 gave the highest number of holophrastic frequencies, which was a total of 9 holophrastic utterances. The total percentage of holophrastic utterances in shot number 9 provided a total of 24.32%. Interestingly, the xG of shot number 9 indicated a number of 0.01, which can be regarded as a relatively low number. An evident factor was that holophrastic utterances were uttered in each goal-scoring event. The goal-scoring events are thus marked in bold.

Shot number	Holophrastic Utterances	Percentage	xG
1	0	0.00%	0.09
2	3	8.11%	**0.35**
3	0	0.00%	0.12
4	0	0.00%	0.06
5	0	0.00%	0.02
6	1	2.70%	**0.81**

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[4] Numbers collected from https://understat.com/match/16463

7	0	0.00%	0.04
8	1	2.70%	0.06
9	9	24.32%	0.01
10	1	2.70%	0.04
11	5	13.51%	0.02
12	0	0.00%	0.02
13	0	0.00%	0.08
14	0	0.00%	0.36
15	0	0.00%	0.02
16	0	0.00%	0.04
17	6	16.22%	0.07
18	1	2.70%	**0.59**
19	1	2.70%	0.27
20	3	8.11%	**0.44**
21	0	0.00%	0.04
22	1	2.70%	**0.68**
23	3	8.11%	0.05
24	0	0.00%	0.04
25	0	0.00%	0.11
26	0	0.00%	0.03
27	0	0.00%	0.68
28	0	0.00%	0.02
29	0	0.00%	0.15
30	2	5.41%	0.04
31	0	0.00%	0.04
Total	**37**	**100.00%**	**5.39**

Table 8: Holophrastic Utterances in the Transcription of Manchester United vs Liverpool FC October 24th, 2021.

Table 9 displays the total of xG and percentage of holophrastic utterances in relation to the time periods in the football match. The structure of a football match is a division between two periods, or more precisely, two halves with a fifteen-minute break between the respective

halves. A notable factor in Table 8 above was that there was indeed a remarkable demarcation in both xG and frequency of holophrastic utterances between the two halves. In Table 9 below, the demarcation is displayed candidly. As one can discern, the xG in the first half was 3.51. However, the second half provided an xG number of 1.88 which further gave the impression that the quantity and quality of shots decreased throughout the match. Furthermore, the percentage of holophrastic utterances in the first half was a total 83.78%. In contrast, the percentage of holophrastic utterances in the second half was 16.22%. These numbers gave the impression that both the frequency and quality of shots were of better quality in the first half. Evidently, the vast difference in the xG in the two halves complemented the fact that there was a correlation between xG and holophrases in the SAT.

Half	xG	Percentage of Holophrastic Utterances
First Half	3.51	83.78%
Second Half	1.88	16.22%
Total	5.39	100.00%

Table 9: Total Percentage of Holophrastic Utterances in Relation to xG in Manchester United vs. Liverpool FC October 24th, 2021.

Table 10 below shows the frequencies of holophrastic utterances in the event type "shots" in the match between Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United on April 19th, 2022. Out of the total 16 shots, there were 14 instances of holophrastic utterances. The average frequency of holophrastic usage per shot in Table 10 was thus 0.88. In general terms, holophrastic utterances were therefore more likely to occur than not in the event type "shots" in this match. Holophrastic utterances occurred in 9 of the total 16 shots, which gave the impression that these were present in 56% of the total 16 shots. The shot which included the largest frequency of holophrastic utterances was shot number 1, where a total of three frequencies of holophrases were uttered. It is noteworthy that this shot ended up as a goal. Moreover, as discerned in Table 8, the xG of the shots that ended up in goal were marked in bold. It is evident that the commentator used holophrastic utterances in all the four goals in this match. More precisely,

the number of holophrastic utterances communicated by the commentator in goal scoring events were a total of 8 times, which further equaled 57% of the 14 instances of total usage.

Shot number	Holophrastic Utterances	Percentage	xG
1	3	21.43%	**0.62**
2	0	0.00%	0.04
3	2	14.29%	0.08
4	0	0.00%	0.01
5	0	0.00%	0.01
6	2	14.29%	**0.32**
7	1	7.14%	0.08
8	0	0.00%	0.41
9	1	7.14%	0.02
10	0	0.00%	0.04
11	1	7.14%	0.07
12	2	14.29%	**0.14**
13	0	0.00%	0.03
14	1	7.14%	**0.14**
15	0	0.00%	0.04
16	1	7.14%	0.31
Total	**14**	**100.00%**	**2.36**

Table 10: Holophrastic Utterances in the Transcription of Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United April 19th, 2022.

In similar fashion to the procedure in Table 9 above, Table 11 below displays the total of xG and percentage of holophrastic utterances in relation to the time periods in the football match. It is evident that the quality and quantity of shots were better in the first half compared to the second half. This is apparent due to the difference in xG, whereas the first half's xG was 1.59 and the second half's xG was 0.77. This development is transparent with the percentage of holophrastic utterances. The percentage of holophrastic utterances in the first half was

64.29%, while the percentage of usage in the second half was 35.71%. It was therefore apparent that the holophrastic utterances of the commentator developed in line with the match's xG.

Half	xG	Percentage of Holophrastic Utterances
First Half	1.59	64.29%
Second Half	0.77	35.71%
Total	2.36	100.00%

Table 11: Total Percentage of Holophrastic Utterances in Relation to xG in Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United April 19th, 2022.

The holophrastic usage in the SAT from the fixtures between Manchester United and Liverpool FC in the 2021/2022 season provided a myriad of insightful comparative findings. A significant factor between the two matches was indeed the difference in the shots where the former match included 31 shots and the latter contained 16. This factor, among other factors as the quality and angle of shots (as elaborated in section 2.5), influenced the vast demarcation in total xG. In addition, it is important to note that the tables of frequencies of shots and holophrastic usage provided the accumulated number of each individual shot. As presented in Table 8 above, the accumulated xG of shots equalled 5.39 whilst the overall number of xG for this match was 5.41. As one can see in Table 10, the accumulated xG of each individual shot is 2.36 although the overall xG provided by understat.com was 2.37 for this match. As elaborated in section 4.2, this discrepancy is due to chances that occur in short sequences where the xG number provides insufficient numbers due to the actual probabilities of a goal. A notable distinction from the two matches is the overall holophrastic utterance frequency. More precisely, the former match included a total of 37 holophrastic utterances, whilst the latter match contained a total of 14 instances. Therefore, it is apparent that the former match included more than double of the latter match's frequencies of holophrastic utterances. The average holophrastic utterance per shot in the former match was 1.2. In contrast, the average holophrastic utterance in the latter match was 0.88 per shot. Moreover, a similar aspect in both Table 8 and 10 above is that there are frequencies of holophrastic utterances in all the

accumulated 9 goals scored. Another similar phenomenon in both matches is the development of holophrastic usage in the second half. In Table 9 above, one can ascertain that a total of 83.78% of holophrastic utterances were verbalised in the first half of the match. This factor is equivalent in Table 11, where the percentage of holophrastic usage were verbalised 64.29% in the first half as opposed to 35.71% in the second half. Altogether, holophrastic usage was more prominent in the first half of both matches.

5.1.2 Deictic *here*

Table 12 displays the frequencies of *here* in the speech of the play-by-play and secondary commentators in both matches (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). The n-gram tool in AntConc was used in the process of searching for possible word combinations. The n-gram size was set to 2 with 0 open slots, and a minimum range and frequency of 1. The overall frequency of *here*-usage in both appendices was 150. In order to investigate the recurring usages in more detail, the n-gram size was set to 2 and limited to the top 10 combinations. Henceforth, the overall frequency of *here* among the top 10 combinations was 83. A striking observation from Table 12 below is the frequency of *here s.* At first glance, this combination can be perceived as a grammatical discrepancy due to the lack of apostrophe. However, it is important to consider that AntConc does not provide any type of characters in the results. Hence, *here s* represents the usage of *here's* in the appendices. Furthermore, Table 12 below shows that *here's* is used a total of 39 times. The frequency of *here's* equalled an overall of 47% of total word combinations from the n-gram results. Moreover, the second most frequented combination is the usage of *here* with conjunction *and*. The overall percentage of this combination was 13.3%. The demarcation from the first and second most frequented combination of *here* was thus a striking 33.7%. The contraction *here's* was therefore an invigorating finding due to its dominating frequency in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. Furthermore, the remaining frequencies of *here* combination in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 were not investigated due to their insignificant number of frequencies.

Type	Rank	Freq	Percentage	Range
here s	1	39	47.0%	2
here and	2	11	13.3%	2
here today	3	6	7.2%	1
here at	4	5	6.0%	2
here he	5	4	4.8%	2
here is	5	4	4.8%	2
here manchester	5	4	4.8%	2
here to	5	4	4.8%	2
here liverpool	9	3	3.6%	1
here yeah	9	3	3.6%	1
Total		**83**	**100.0%**	

Table 12: Frequency of *here* in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2

An incentive of approaching the usage of *here's* in the SAT in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 was to investigate its usage in relation to the events on the football pitch. Therefore, the quantitative approach of counting the frequencies of usage in relation to the events on the pitch was considered a convenient alternative. The categorisation of events, or match situations, was inspired by Mackenzie's (2005) division of on-pitch events that affect syntactic restriction. As explained in section 3.1, Mackenzie argued that the events on the pitch had an impact on the commentator in terms of time pressure. In that respect, the same principle was applied to the operation in Tables 13 and 14 below. The different match situations utilised in this approach were *defense, midfield,* and *attack.* Figure 2 below demonstrates the different degrees of time pressure regarding the aforementioned match situations. In that sense, Figure 2 established that there was a low time pressure when the ball is played in the defense of one team. When a team progresses into midfield, the time pressure was developed into a moderate time pressure. Ultimately, when a team was in attack, the time pressure was assigned to the high level. With the different levels of time pressure and categorisation of match situations, the process of categorising the usages of *here's* was made easier.
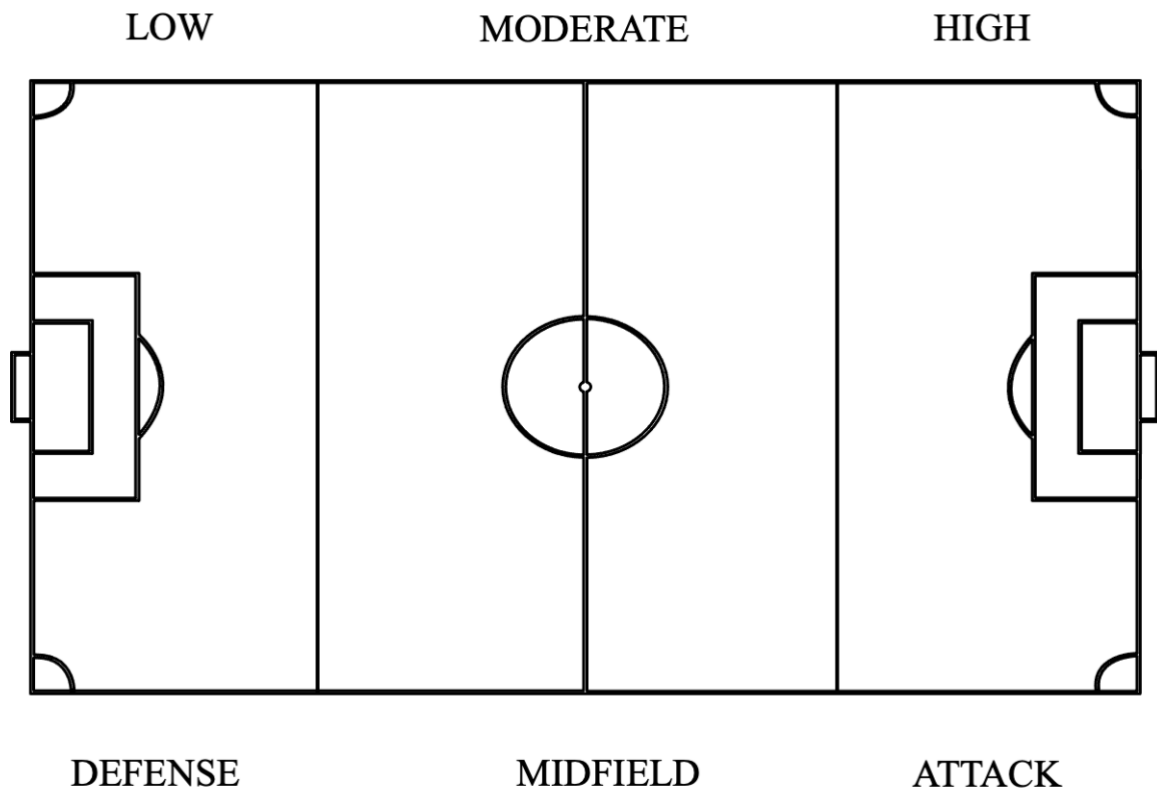
Figure 2: Time Pressure in Relation to Events on the Football Pitch.

Table 13 below displays the frequency and percentage of the contraction *here's* in relation to match situations in Appendix 1. The data was collected by matching the usages of *here's* with where the team with the ball had been positioned on the pitch. In order to pursue this process, the video material of the selected matches was viewed from the BCE Sportflix archive. The overall frequency of *here's* usage in this match was 14 times. As elaborated earlier, the categorisation of time pressure in relation to the match situations was applied. The results of *here's* usage in match situation *defense* were 5 occurrences, which represented a total 35.71% of the total frequency. A slightly reduced number was counted in *midfield* situations, as 2 instances of *here's* were identified. As one can see in Table 13, the frequency of *here's* in midfield represented 14.29%. Lastly, the largest frequency of *here's* usage was verbalised in attacking situations. The total frequency for *here's* in attacking situations was 7, which encompass 50% of the total frequency. Therefore, the most prominent match situation that promoted *here's* usage in Appendix 1 was the *attack* category.

Match Situation	Frequency	Percentage
Defense	5	35.71%
Midfield	2	14.29%
Attack	7	50.00%
Total	**14**	**100,00%**

Table 13: Frequency of *here's* in Accordance with Match Situation in Appendix 1

Table 14 below demonstrates the frequency and percentage of the contraction *here's* in relation to match situations in Appendix 2. The general frequency in this match was a total of 25 instances of *here's* usage by the play-by-play commentator. The distribution of *here's* usage in Table 14 was 3 instances in the *defense*. In *midfield*, the distribution was a total of 7 utterances. Ultimately, the frequency of usage in the *attack* was 15. In terms of percentages, the *here's* frequencies in the *defense* were 12%, while the *midfield* frequencies represented 28% of the total utterances. Finally, in *attack* situations, the distribution of *here's* utterances reached a total of 60%.

Match Situation	Frequency	Percentage
Defense	3	12.00%
Midfield	7	28.00%
Attack	15	60.00%
Total	**25**	**100.00%**

Table 14: Frequency of *here's* in Accordance with Match Situation in Appendix 2

Comparatively, Tables 13 and 14 provided both similar and distinctive results from the usage of *here's* in the SAT in the different matches. A notable difference was the frequency of *here's*, where there were 9 more instances of usage in the latter match. Moreover, the distribution of usages differed slightly in their relation to match situations. While the commentator's usage of *here's* in the former match represented 35.71% in the match situation *defense*, the usage in the latter match equalled a percentage of 12% in the *defense*. Furthermore, a total of 14.29% of *here's* was uttered in *midfield* situations in the former match, while the

commentator's usage of the contraction in the latter match represented a total of 28%. Lastly, the results of *here's* usage in *attack* situations brought similar outcomes. As displayed in Table 13, a total of 60% of all *here's* utterances were produced in *attack* situations. In the latter match, Table 14 provided the information that a total 60% of here's utterances were verbalised in *attack situations*. Therefore, a notable finding is that the *attack* situations promoted the greatest instances of *here's* usage with over 50% frequency in both Appendix 1 and 2.

5.1.3 N-gram Results

An intention of this study was to investigate the frequent words that were utilised in conjunction with each other and to discern whether there were any notions of time or spatial expressions. In order to ascertain this predicament, the concordance tool AntConc was utilised to demonstrate the frequent words used in conjunction. Firstly, the n-gram size was set to 3 with a minimum word frequency of 1. Secondly, the n-gram size was set to 4 with a minimum frequency of 1. The reason why this method was chosen was due to the possibility of obtaining a wider range of word combination one could investigate with a larger n-gram size. Therefore, both Table 15 and 16 consisted of the most 3-4 grams in both Appendix 1 and 2.

Table 15 below displayes the top 20 most frequented 3-4 grams in Appendix 1. A notable factor which was evident in section 5.1.2, was that there is a lack of characters in some of the 3-grams in both tables. These are distinctive in "*it s a*", "*there s no*", *he s got*, *and it s*, *and he s*, *it s not*, *that s a*, *there s a*, *there s*, *they ve been* and *there s no doubt*. These were primarily contractions of pronoun or determiner + *to be*. The aforementioned contractions will not be discussed in further detail, as they do not contribute significantly to the functions of other multi chunk words. Moreover, there are four examples of proper noun usage in Table 15: *ole gunnar solskjær, for manchester united, at old trafford* and the contraction *manchester united s*. A notable frequency in Table 15 was the joint most frequented 3-gram *a little bit*, which was uttered 14 times in the first match. Another significant finding was the usage of *at the moment*, which was verbalised 7 times in Appendix 1.

Type	Freq	Percentage
a little bit	14	7.53%
it s a	14	7.53%
there s no	14	7.53%
ole gunnar solskjær	13	6.99%
he s got	11	5.91%
and it s	9	4.84%
for manchester united	9	4.84%
it was a	9	4.84%
manchester united s	9	4.84%
a lot of	8	4.30%
and he s	8	4.30%
at old trafford	8	4.30%
it s not	8	4.30%
that s a	8	4.30%
there s a	8	4.30%
they ve been	8	4.30%
there s no doubt	7	3.76%
at the moment	7	3.76%
going to be	7	3.76%
i think he	7	3.76%
Total	**186**	**100.00%**

Table 15: Top 20 3-4 grams in Appendix 1.

The similar prevalence of contractions was present in Table 16 with frequencies of *it s a*, *it s just*, *and it s*, *he s been, there s a*, *well it s*. Usage of proper nouns was also present with *for manchester united* and *the premier league*. The second most frequented multi word chunk was *a little bit* with 15 instances. Moreover, the two preceding multi word chunks which did not contain any contractions were *in the first* with 12 frequencies, and *the first half* with 11 frequencies. Notably, the 4-gram *in the first half* was also evident with 9 frequencies in the match. It is important to note that the same utterances might overlap in the phrases *in the first* and *the first half*. In addition, the usage of the *second half* was uttered a total of 7 times. Furthermore, the 3-gram *at the moment* was verbalised 7 times which corresponded to a

percentage of 3.98%.

Type	Freq	Percentage
it s a	16	9.09%
a little bit	15	8.52%
in the first	12	6.82%
it s just	11	6.25%
the first half	11	6.25%
and it s	10	5.68%
for manchester united	10	5.68%
he s been	9	5.11%
the premier league	9	5.11%
in the first half	9	5.11%
at the moment	7	3.98%
little bit of	7	3.98%
the second half	7	3.98%
there s a	7	3.98%
a bit of	6	3.41%
in front of	6	3.41%
one of the	6	3.41%
there was a	6	3.41%
well it s	6	3.41%
a little bit of	6	3.41%
Total	**176**	**100.00%**

Table 16: Top 20 3-4 grams in Appendix 2.

In Table 17 below, the frequency of the aforestated time expressions with reference to the commentators are provided. More precisely, the results presented which of the commentators used these the most frequently. It is important to note that the majority of time expressions were complemented by articles like *the/that/this*. As one can discern from the

results, the most frequented time expression was *moment* with 19 frequencies. Moreover, *first half* was uttered 14 times, and *second half* was uttered 9 times. Martin Tyler, which inhabited the role as play-by-play commentator, was the commentator who articulated the most frequencies of *first half* and joint most frequencies of *second* half. Colour commentator Gary Neville verbalised most of the time expressions among the commentators, while co-colour commentator Jamie Carragher uttered the least time expressions of the three. A notable factor in these findings was the frequent usage of *moment* from Gary Neville, which equalled 10 instances. More precisely, Gary Neville's utterances of *moment* represented over half of the total frequencies with 52.6%. As one can ascertain from the results, Martin Tyler uttered only 6 frequencies of this time expression, although he functioned as the play-by-play commentator in both matches. In this way, the distribution of time expressions assigned to the different commentators were realised in both matches for this study.

Commentator	*first half*	*second half*	*moment*
Martin Tyler	8 (57.1%)	4 (44.4%)	6 (31.6%)
Gary Neville	5 (35.7%)	4 (44.4%)	10 (52.6%)
Jamie Carragher	1 (7.1%)	1 (11.1%)	3 (15.8%)
Total	**14**	**9**	**19**

Table 17: Frequency of Time Expressions in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2

5.2 Qualitative Findings

The qualitative approach of this study was based on the findings in the quantitative results. More precisely, in order to investigate the different functions of the syntactic elements presented in section 5.1, there was a necessity of analysing these in further detail. A selection of holophrastic utterances was selected to demonstrate their function and operation in high time pressure events. Furthermore, the findings in section 5.1.2 invoked the commitment to investigate the usage of the contraction *here's* in both Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. With the aims of establishing the functions of formulaic language in high time pressure events, a description of each goal utterance was displayed in respective tables and discussed further. In this process, the PIE operated as a comparative corpus to determine whether certain phrases were prevalent in football reports. Lastly, the pervasiveness of dislocations structures was

investigated in a qualitative manner to investigate their communicative and discoursal functions in the SAT.

5.2.1 The Distribution of Holophrastic Utterances in Event Type "Shots"

A notable finding when analysing the frequencies of holophrastic frequencies in the event type "shot" was that there was a significant majority of player name usage. More precisely, the commentator would simply state the player's name when he had possession of the ball or performed an action. To demonstrate this routine of holophrastic formulation, the shots with the most frequencies of holophrastic utterances in both Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 were displayed below. As discerned in section 5.1.1, the shot with the most holophrastic utterances in Appendix 1 was shot number 9 with 9 instances. Moreover, the shot with the most holophrastic utterances in Appendix 2 was shot number 1 with 3 instances.

A notable aspect of shot number 9 below was that the xG number was 0.01. In this sequence, there was a gradual build-up play by Manchester United outside Liverpool FC's goal. In simpler terms, Manchester United were playing the ball in a dangerous area and the result of play ended up as a shot from the left-back Luke Shaw. The holophrastic utterances in this sequence from the commentator are: *Rashford, now Wan-Bissaka, Shaw, McTominay, Wan-Bissaka, Ronaldo, Wan-Bissaka, McTominay* and *now Shaw*. All of these holophrastic utterances are realised by their intonational prominence and as the Focus of the utterance. Moreover, all holophrastic utterances in this sequence include a focal subact of reference, as each refers to an action by the player with the usage of that respective player's name.

```
Rashford. Supported by Fred. Supported by McTominay. Now Wan-
Bissaka. Shaw. Out by Konaté. Played by Fred. McTominay.
Ronaldo, shrewd touch. McTominay again. () for Liverpool. And
United have to start from deeper but they still got the ball.
Wan-Bissaka. McTominay. Now Shaw. Could line one up here…
```
(Shot number 9, Appendix 1 lines 221-226)

Shot number 1 in Appendix 2 was the event that provided the highest number of xG in the match with a total of 0.62. In this sequence, *Henderson, Mané* and *Salah* operate as holophrastic utterances. The event of this sequence ended up as a goal for Liverpool FC, where Luis Diaz scored the 1-0 goal. Each was realised by the intonational prominence and their status as the Focus of the utterance. Moreover, the ellipsis between the first two utterances signifies a clear distinction between the two. The third example of a holophrastic utterance in shot number 1 is *Salah.* In similar sense, this was uttered with intonational prominence. Altogether, each holophrastic utterance in shot number 3 consists of a focal subact of reference.

```
Henderson. Mané. They've got runners over, Manchester United
cut apart here. Salah, for Diaz.
```
(Shot number 1, Appendix 2 lines 55-56).

As mentioned above, shot number 1 provided the highest number of xG in that respective match. However, the highest xG number in the former match was to be found in shot number 6, which provided a number of 0.81. It was therefore enticing to investigate the utterances of the shot with the highest xG in Appendix 1.

As the excerpt from Appendix 1 implied, the event leading up to the shot was a defensive error between Manchester United defenders Harry Maguire and Luke Shaw which ultimately resulted in a goal for Liverpool FC. In this instance, *Alexander-Arnold* operated as the only holophrastic utterance. In addition to previous examples, the utterance consisted of a focal subact of reference due to its intonational prominence and its operation as the Focus. As will be investigated in section 5.2.2, the displayed utterance did not include the entirety of verbalisations from the commentator. This is due to the esteemed requirement of only analysing the speech of the commentator which was produced simultaneously with events on the pitch.

```
And a mistake here between Shaw and Maguire. Alexander-Arnold...
```
(Shot number 6, Appendix 1 line 129-130)

As discernible from the excerpts in both appendices, the majority of holophrastic utterances consisted of a focal subact of reference. However, among the total 51 instances of

holophrastic utterances, only one contained a focal subact of predication. This instance occurred in shot number 6 in Appendix 2. The shot provided an xG number of 0.32. The first instance of a holophrase occurs in the first clause of the utterance with the Liverpool FC player *Matip*. As the aforementioned examples implied, this utterance consisted of a focal subact of reference. However, *superb* suggested a focal subact of predication. This was due to its relation to the goal-scoring action performed by Salah. In this sense, *superb* acted as an adjective to Salah's finishing. Henceforth, the holophrastic utterance conveyed an expressive meaning related to the aforestated action with only one word.

```
Matip, did well to find the pass to Mané, in for Salah.
Superb.  (Shot number 6, Appendix 2, line 212)
```

5.2.2 The Distribution of Contraction *here's*

Section 5.1.2 provided the overall frequencies of deictic *here* with special emphasis on the contraction *here's*. In addition, its usage related to in-game situations was displayed where these were divided into the categories *defense, midfield* and *attack*. Although the usage of *here's* and its relation to in-game situations were presented, the syntactic element was not discussed in further detail. The intention of this section is therefore to present the syntactic aspects of *here's* usage in Appendix 1 and 2. In that sense, all usages of the contraction *here's* in both matches are presented in Table 18 and 19 below. The concordance program AntConc was used to extract the contents of each table. The following process was pursued in each of the respective corpora. The n-gram size was set to 2 with 0 open slots, minimum 1 frequency and minimum 1 range. Further, the "here s" was implemented in the search field. By searching for this, every instance of *here's* usage was available to view in the KWIC tool. Moreover, all instances were extracted and put into tables. The colours provided in the tables were automatically provided by AntConc, each representing different n-gram tokens. A notable factor is that the contracted "s" is marked as a separate colour. This is an automatic procedure by AntConc, as mentioned in section 5.1.2, where it regards the contracted "s" as an individual

n-gram token.

An eminent observation from Table 18 below is the complementation of a subject after *here's*. This is evident in all 14 instances of usage in this match. More precisely, *here's* was placed in frontal position in the clause with the "'s" operating as the contracted copula. Moreover, *here's* was placed in clause-frontal position with the "'s" operating as a contracted copula verb. In that sense, each usage entails this syntactic build. In frequency number 9 and 13, parentheses including three punctuations are written. The usage of these indicate that the utterances of the commentator are unintelligible. Further, frequency number 1, 3 and 10 include a present continuous verb to their structure. Frequency number 2, 3, 5, 11 and 14 include a punctuation after the subject. This is due to the realisation of a full stop by the commentator, where he did not utter a word instantaneously after the initial utterance. Moreover, frequency number 4 is followed by the conjunction *and* with another player "Firmino". In frequency number 12, the usage of *here's* + subject is followed by a subject predicate "the man of the moment".

Freq	Usage of *here*	Subject + rest of utterance
1	Here's	Alexander-Arnold trying to create some more and (…)
2	Here's	Fred. Dalot. (…) Alexander-Arnold and eh, Oxlade-Chamberlain
3	Here's	Jota, almost connecting then. Would have been a
4	Here's	Keita, and Firmino has been forced a little
5	Here's	Konaté. Curtis Jones. Here come Liverpool again with
6	Here's	Luke Shaw. United have gone to a diamond,
7	Here's	Mané. Certainly tries to get one for himself,
8	Here's	Oxlade-Chamberlain. Going with him. Certainly doesn't
9	Here's	Robertson.(…) back to front foot now Liverpool. Jota.
10	Here's	Ronaldo recognising an opportunity, still wanting to add
11	Here's	Ronaldo, Greenwood trying to stay onside. And again,
12	Here's	Salah, the man of the moment, and McTominay
13	Here's	van Dijk. (…) is the confidence and recovery, that
14	Here's	Wan-Bissaka. Here's Fred. Dalot. (…) Alexander-Arnold

Table 18: Usage of the Contraction *here's* in Appendix 1

In Table 19, the similar syntactic aspect of *here's* placed in clause-frontal position followed by a subject was evident in Appendix 2. All frequencies except one entailed the *here's* + player name formulation. The one exception was found in frequency number 23, where the commentator referred to the Liverpool FC player Robertson by announcing: "Here's the left back who is always full of…". Moreover, the syntactic build of frequency number 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 21 and 25 consisted of only *here's* + player name followed by a punctuation. As mentioned earlier, this means that the commentator did not follow up with any other sentence, phrase nor word. A punctuation was included in the transcriptions when there were definite breaks the commentator's utterances. Further, in frequency number 4 there was additional of information complementing the previous events, namely the fact that Salah had the ball. In more technical terms, *Maguire* operates as the subject of the sentence followed by the auxiliary verb *is* and finally the gerund phrase *back peddling*. Furthermore, a copula deletion was found in *Salah slipping*. In frequency number 5, 6 and 19, the usage of *here's* was complemented by a subject predicate. The first instance described that the player Salah was on a hattrick, which means that he had scored two goals. The second instance of subject predicate indicated that the player Salah was in a rush with the adjective phrase *too much* and prepositional phrase *of a hurry*. In 19, the conjunction *but* is followed by the verb phrase including *couldn't keep it* which indicates that the player could not retain possession. Frequency number 7 indicated a rapid succession of events due to comma usage rather that punctuation. This was realised by the complementation of another player "Henderson". Frequency number 8, 15 and 20 added the conjunction *and* to its syntactic build. The *here's* usage in frequency number 12, 14, 24 is complemented by the present continuous verb forms *raking, trying,* and *searching*. Cases of copula deletion are evident in these instances, where the auxiliary verbs were omitted from the verbalisations.

Freq	Usage of *here*	Subject + rest of utterance
1	Here's	Fabinho. Jones played Diaz in. Yeah, there are
2	Here's	Fabinho. Now Robertson. There's a real contrast
3	Here's	Fabinho. Salah losing out to Dalot. Rashford,(…)off
4	Here's	Salah, Maguire is back peddling, Salah slipping. The

5	Here's	Salah, on a hattrick of course for the
6	Here's	Salah, too much of a hurry. Breaks for
7	Here's	Luis Diaz, Henderson, and it did look offside
8	Here's	Luis Diaz, and then and then Alexander-Arnold,
9	Here's	Thiago. Robertson again. As I said before the
10	Here's	Thiago. Van Dijk. Here's Fabinho. Salah losing
11	Here's	Alexander-Arnold. And we thought Bruno Fernandes might
12	Here's	Alisson again, raking it away from Fernandes. I
13	Here's	Bruno Fernandes. It's what they've been
14	Here's	Fabinho trying to find a route through, and
15	Here's	Mané and Keita has forced him too wide.
16	Here's	Mané, easily cut out by Maguire. Fernandes. Wan-
17	Here's	Matic. Out by Henderson. Wan-Bissaka has actually
18	Here's	Rashford. Cut out by Robertson. Martin Atkinson letting
19	Here's	Robertson, but he couldn't keep it. The
20	Here's	Salah and here is number four, with the
21	Here's	Salah. The interesting thing was van Dijk has
22	Here's	Sancho, who's had one or two moments,
23	Here's	the left back who is always full of
24	Here's	Thiago, searching for the ball, slide ruling the
25	Here's	van Dijk. Alexander-Arnold, and again. What you

Table 19: Usage of the Contraction *here's* in Appendix 2.

5.2.3 Formulaicness in Event Type "Goal"

Tables 20 and 21 below display the utterances of the play-by-play commentator in each of the goal-scoring events from Appendix 1 and 2. In the respective tables, the goal number is evident in the left column. Furthermore, the goal description of the commentator was implemented with the xG of the goal. Lastly, the information of which lines from the appendix is found in the column to the right. An inherent factor in both Table 20 and 21 was to distinguish the event-

related commentary from the non-event related commentary. In simpler terms, it was important to mark whether the utterances of the commentator were produced simultaneously with the events or not. In order to clarify this distinction, the on-line utterances that depicted the ongoing events leading up to the goal were marked in bold. The parts of language that were not depicting events in real time were not marked in bold. More precisely, the theories of *action description, recap description* and *background description* from Reaser (2003) were relevant when distinguishing the different event-related commentary functions. In likeness to the identification of holophrastic utterances, the theories of on-line references and off-line references from Müller (2007) were also utilised. These were used in order to estimate whether the utterance was deemed action descriptive or recap descriptive. In that sense, on-line references were correlating with the action description and off-line description correlated with recap description. The intention of analysing formulaic phrases in goal-scoring events was to investigate their functions, usage in terms of temporality and discern their types (either metonymic or metaphoric). The latter intention was based on Levin's (2008) findings that metonymic links are more frequent in goal-scoring events, and metaphoric links were connected to time expressions.

In goal number 1 with an xG of 0.35 in Appendix 1, the action descriptive commentary consisted of a succession of player names operating as holophrastic utterances. The usage of *he's rolled it in* indicated that the player had scored a goal and the literal meaning of the ball rolling into the goal. A distinction is, however, the following phrase *rolled out a booster here*. Here, the commentator repeated the past tense verb *rolled* with a combination of another string of words, *out a booster*. This is a metaphoric link which indicated that the goal gave his team a boost after it was scored.

Goal number 2 was the goal that included the highest number of xG with an overall of 0.81. An interesting observation in goal number 2 was the commentator's immediate utterance after the goal was scored. As Table 20 displays, the phrase *two easy* was used. At first sight, this could be interpreted as ungrammatical, as the common string of words would be *too easy*. In Table 20, the intonational prominence was realised by a comma to indicate that there was indeed a definite pause in the between the utterances of the two words. More precisely, the unification of these two words was disjointed due to a brief moment of silence from the commentator after uttering *and it's two* and was then followed up with *easy*. One can therefore characterise this phrase as a homophone, due to its similarity in pronunciation but difference

in meaning and spelling. A comma was implemented to indicate the intonational aspect. Although traditional CA conventions would use another symbol for this, the limitations of transcriptions explained in section 4.3 were still applied in this instance. Furthermore, the usage of *tap-in* can be observed as a word within the football lexis as its majority of 13 out of total 69 usages in PIE n-gram tokens were related to football reports. It is inherent to note that there was a difference from *tap-in* and *tap in* where the former operated as a noun and the latter as a verb.

A significant observation in goal number 3 was the usage of *cooking it up* in the action related description. In the PIE one can observe that this usage was primarily related to the field of culinary practices. However, in this sense it was related to the build-up play by from Liverpool FC. This was possible to conclude by viewing the video material from the match and by the frequent usage of holophrastic utterances from the commentator. The phrase *cooking it up* can thus be regarded as a metaphoric link, as it could be understood as a separate meaning of its literal sense. Additionally, the commentator provided background information in that Salah had scored in his *tenth appearance in a row*. In likeness with goal number 1, the commentator utilised repetition. However, in this setting the repetition operated firstly as an adjective modifier of *appearance* and then metonymically in *ten out of ten for the Egyptian king*. The usage of *ten out of ten* was found in 25 tokens in PIE. However, none of them were linked to football reports. Moreover, *the Egyptian king* refers to the nickname of footballer Mohammed Salah, which is frequently sung in fan chants (talkSPORT 2022). In this utterance, the commentator emphasised the quality of Salah's performance.

Goal number 4 provided several instances of formulaic usage from the commentator. After the action description of the goal, the commentator altered to the mode of background announcement. Furthermore, the noun *mayhem* was used in relation to Manchester United's performance. Out of 100 instances in PIE, *mayhem* was used 4 times in football reports. Moreover, the words *cashing in on every chance* were uttered in relation to Liverpool FC's performance. *Cashing in* was found in 2 out of 75 tokens in PIE. Most instances were linked to the transfer of money. In this sense, however, it was used to explain how Liverpool FC had utilised their opportunities in the match. Both *mayhem* and *cashing in on every chance* can thus be regarded as metaphoric as both utterances are not literally applicable. Another usage of lexical repetition is to be found in goal number 4. This was evident with the usage of *shake* in *shake of the head* and *shake up his team*. The first usage is a direct description of the

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjær shaking his head in disapproval of his team's performance but *shake of the head* in this setting operates as a noun phrase. This was evident to recognise in the video material of the match. Moreover, the verbal repetition of *shake* in *shake up his team* can be understood as metonymic.

In goal number 5, a question was posed by the commentator as the last utterance in the action descriptive mode. The question was ultimately answered when the commentator switched to the background mode of commentary. Another instance of lexical repetition was apparent in this goal-scoring utterance: *it's five inside five minutes of the second half*. The first usage of *five* was related to the number of goals that had been scored in the match. The second instance *five minutes* was related to the temporality of the match.

Goal nr.	Event-Related Utterance	xG	Line(s) in Appendix 1
1	MT: **Jota. Firmino. Salah, playing central. And he's played Naby Keita in here,** and Liverpool do take their early chance. Well, he's rolled it in and rolled out a booster here, for the away team.	**0.35**	44-47
2	MT: **And a mistake here between Shaw and Maguire. Alexander-Arnold** and it's two, easy. Diogo Jota. A tap-in. It's Manchester United nil, Liverpool two. They're two down at home again.	**0.81**	129-132
3	MT: **Salah had made the run from outside to in. Firmino. Henderson. Firmino. Salah. Cooking it up Liverpool here. Jota. Salah. Great from Naby Keita, Salah.** He keeps on going, Liverpool keep on scoring and Mo Salah is the man again. He scores for a tenth appearance in a row, ten out of ten for the Egyptian king.	**0.59**	380-384
4	MT: **Jota. Salah. Wow.** It is absolute mayhem for Manchester United and Liverpool are cashing in on every chance. Mo Salah gets his second,	**0.44**	500-504

	Liverpool get the fourth. Solskjær, shake of the head. He needs to shake up his team. It's almost as if Salah couldn't believe how easy it was.		
5	MT: **Henderson, what a pass that is for Mo Salah, is this going to be the hat trick?** It certainly is. It's five inside five minutes of the second half. Only Dirk Kuyt has got a Liverpool hat trick in the Premier League against Manchester United and now you can add Mo Salah for that very short list. Whatever he does, he tops it the next week.	**0.68**	564-569

Table 20: Event-Related Utterances in Event Type "Goals" in Appendix 1.

The initial action description in goal number 1 in Appendix 2 included two holophrastic utterances of player names followed up with *they've got runners over*, *Manchester United*. In the latter expression, *runners* was utilised instead of *players*, which made an impression that the Liverpool FC players were in an attacking situation in the match with players running towards the attacking goal. Moreover, the additional information *Manchester United cut apart here* indicated that Manchester United were in a possible situation of conceding a goal. *Cut apart* was used metaphorically giving the impression that Liverpool FC pierced through the opposition. Another metaphor was found in the background description: *he just rounded it off*. In the PIE, the verbal phrase *round off* was used 4 instances out of a total 84 times in football reports.

In the action description in goal number 2, the formulaic usage of *find* was used in conjunction with the action of passing: *did well to find the pass*. As mentioned in section 2.3, *find* operates as a frequent formulaic verb in the SAT. The phrase *find the pass* operated in this setting as a metonymic link as it highlighted the action of passing using formulaic *find* as its verb. Furthermore, the utterance *Salah is back on the goal trail* included interesting formulaic usage. The 2-gram *goal trail* provided 4 tokens in PIE which were all related to football reports.

Back on the goal trail can thus be regarded as a metaphoric link as it gave the impression that Salah was back to scoring goals and not directly related to a literal trail.

A metonymic link was found in the action description in goal number 3 where the commentator uttered *and four forward in red here*. This indicated the number of Liverpool FC players rushing towards the goal with the usage of *in red* to characterise their red kits instead of saying the team's name. Moreover, *at a time of need* operated as a metaphoric link because it expressed the matter of urgency of Mané's goal. As Table 21 displays, another instance of formulaic *find* was used. Herein, the word was used in the following setting: *finds the bottom corner*. The 3-gram *the bottom corner* provided 22 tokens in the PIE where 11 out of 18 instances were to be found in football reports.

In the utterances of goal number 4, which was the final goal in this match, there are several instances of formulaicness. Initially, the recap commentary *and here is number four* can be perceived as a metonymic link. Here, the commentator referred to the event that a goal had been scored. However, the goal was only referred to as *number four* instead of *goal number four*. Moreover, the description of Mohammed Salah's performance was depicted as *with the deftest of touches*. This can be regarded as metaphoric to characterise Salah's accurate and precise control of the ball. Moreover, both *get his goal scoring touch back* and *scoring touch in itself was absolutely delightful* can be understood as metaphoric. The former gave the impression that Salah had temporarily lost his ability to score goals, but now he had regained it. The latter explained the act of his goal-scoring as pleasing and enjoyable. The 2-gram *scoring touch* was found 8 times in the PIE where each token was related to football. Lastly, the final clauses of the goal-description were as following: *Five at Old Trafford, four at Anfield and still more than five minutes to go.* In likeness with the first metonymic link presented, there was a similar notion of this aspect in this segment. The background announcement of the first two utterances: *five at Old Trafford* and *four at Anfield* referred to the number of goals that were scored in the last fixture and the current one. In similar sense to *here is number four*, both could be perceived as metonymic due to the intention of referring to goals but only referring to them as numbers. Moreover, *five minutes to go* referred to the remaining time of the match. The 3-gram *minutes to go* was evident in 60 out of 100 total tokens in PIE.

Goal nr.	Event-Related Utterance	xG	Line(s) in Appendix 2
1	MT: **Henderson. Mané. They've got runners over, Manchester United cut apart here. Salah for Diaz.** All too simple for the team that's aiming to be top of the league tonight. Well, he's been some signing, and he just rounded it off, with Manchester United defence was nowhere.	**0.62**	55-59
2	MT: **Matip, did well to find the pass to Mané, in for Salah. Superb.** Liverpool at their very best and Mo Salah is back on the goal trail again. The great touch by Matip, in the heart of that. Two-nil.	**0.32**	212-214
3	MT: **And four forward in red here. Mané,** oh goodness me. What accuracy at a time of need, strange to say. Just drifting away from Liverpool, not by far, but the margins are tight at this stage of the season and then Sadio Mané effortlessly finds the bottom corner and it's three-nil.	**0.14**	685-689
4	MT: **Jota, here's Salah** and here is number four, with the deftest of touches, he picked this game to get this goal-scoring touch back and that scoring touch in itself was absolutely delightful. Five at Old Trafford, four at Anfield and still more than five minutes to go.	**0.14**	816-821

Table 21: Event-Related Utterances in Event Type "Goals" in Appendix 2.

5.2.4 Dislocation

The incentive of investigating the usage of dislocation in the SAT was due to the predicament by Callies & Levin (2019) that the syntactic phenomenon had been neglected in SAT research. Another condition for the investigation of dislocation was to examine its relation to time

pressure. To construct a relation between the usage of dislocation and time pressure of the commentator, Reaser's (2003) categories of the different modes of commentary were utilised in a comparative manner. More precisely, each example of dislocation was categorised into which mode of commentary the utterance was produced in. Moreover, there was no inclination to construct a comparative analysis of dislocation usage between the two matches. Firstly, this was because it was desirable to uncover their general usage, that is, whether there was a prominence of either LD or RD usage. The second inclination was the wish to investigate Callies & Levin's (2019) finding that time-criticality of these utterances is unaffected by the events that cause commentator pressure on the pitch.

Sentences (25) and (26) below were produced in action descriptive commentary. More precisely, they were uttered during a phase of play in which the commentator was inclined to narrate the ongoing events. It is notable that all action descriptive examples below are uttered by the play-by-play commentator Martin Tyler. The event in (25) was that the defenders of Liverpool FC were letting the ball go to their goalkeeper Alisson to pick the ball up. In this sentence, the NP *the goalkeeper* operated as a co-referential pronoun to *Alisson* in the core clause. One can therefore conclude that this sentence is a RD. *The goalkeeper* in this sense was referring to Alisson's position on the pitch, which therefore operated as an add-on function. Moreover, (26) referred to an off-pitch event. The TV aimed its focus on former Liverpool FC player and manager Kenny Dalglish[5], who was seated in the stands at Manchester United's stadium Old Trafford. As one can discern in section 2.2.2, it is possible to regard this as a sentence with a heavy modifier. The reason why this can be perceived as action description was because of the depiction of the ongoing visual display. Moreover, the utterance can be understood as an example of RD. This is due to the addition of the subject *Kenny Dalglish* in sentence-final position, thus operating as an add-on function.

(25) **MT**: Defenders leaving it to Alisson, the goalkeeper.
(Appendix 2, lines 718-719)

(26) **MT:** He's got a very generous smile, Kenny Dalglish.
(Appendix 2, lines 239-240)

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[5] https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kenny-Dalgilsh Accessed 17th of April 2023

Sentences (27), (28) and (29) below were all produced in the background mode of commentary. As aforementioned, background-related commentary is realised through a description on a player's, team's or coach's last performances (Reaser 306). In sentence (27) and (28), the dislocated usage of *Liverpool* operated in a manner of RD. In (27), the foregoing event before the utterance was a failed goal kick from Manchester United goalkeeper David De Gea searching for the right-back Aaron Wan-Bissaka. One can therefore characterise this event as a dead-ball situation. The next event in the match was a throw in for Liverpool FC, and the utterance in (27) was delivered by play-by-play commentator Martin Tyler. It is therefore possible to perceive the usage of right-dislocated *Liverpool* as a discourse function to avoid referential ambiguity with *they* in terms of which team had *won in the last ten at Anfield in the league*. The similar usage of avoiding referential ambiguity was present in sentence (28). However, ongoing events during the commentator's verbalisations were the ball being passed among the defenders of Liverpool FC. The addition of the adverb *tonight* reflected the performance which Liverpool FC had displayed against Manchester United. Sentence (29) operated as background commentary because of the commentator's description of the sacking of a manager at a different club to those in play. In this sense, the commentator referred to information which was not related to the match in play. This sentence can be understood as a RD, due to the sentence final *I'm sure*, which also operated as an add-on. The additive *I'm sure* reflected the commentator's belief of the manager getting appointed to a new managerial position.

(27) **MT:** Remember, they've won in the last ten at Anfield in the league, Liverpool.
(Appendix 2, lines 121-122)

(28) **MT:** They have sent their message to Manchester City, Liverpool tonight.
(Appendix 2, lines 804-805)

(29) **MT:** Won't be long until Sean is back at work, I'm sure.
(Appendix 2, line 554) add-on

In sentence (30) below, the visual display was focused on Liverpool FC player Thiago, who was present on the bench after being substituted. One can therefore argue that this can be categorised as a recap related commentary. The utterance consisted of a description of his performance with a metaphoric link *made the match dance to his tune*. The dislocated element *Thiago* was placed to the right of the clause, thus making it a RD. The discourse function was confirmatory as Thiago was in the camera frame during verbal production, thus making it an add-on.

(30) **MT:** He made the match dance to his tune, Thiago. (Appendix 2, line 896)

A significant aspect for the elaborated examples of RD and LD was that every example was produced by play-by-play commentator Martin Tyler. However, the remaining excerpts from Appendix 1 and 2 consisted of speech from either colour commentator Gary Neville or Jamie Carragher. Sentence (31), (32) and (33) below were all categorised as evaluation commentary, which was characterised by a description of a player's current performance (Reaser 306). All examples included the syntactic aspect of RD due to the positioning of the subject on the right of the clause. Sentence (31 and (32) were produced by Gary Neville. The events in both utterances were tackles that could possibly end up as a red card. The colour commentator provides an interpretation of the situation in (31) as the player Keita was given a yellow card instead of a red. Indicating his luck of avoiding a red, Gary Neville affirmed that *he's a lucky boy*. The dislocated *Keita* in this sentence operated as an add-on function. This case was different in (32). Here, the player Paul Pogba was in danger of receiving a red card, which he ultimately did. Due to the criticality of the tackle, *Paul Pogba* in this case entailed a function of emphasis. Likewise, a function of emphasis was evident in sentence (33). The second colour commentator Jamie Carragher evaluated Mohammed Salah's performance: *he has looked razor sharp,* and that he had helped his team unselfishly with *not all about the goals*. In this event, Salah had produced a corner kick for Liverpool FC and a close-up frame was displayed during Carragher's utterance. The moment Salah was displayed in a close-up, Carragher provided the dislocated *Mo Salah* with the discourse function of emphasis.

(31) **GN:** `He's a lucky boy, Keita.` (Appendix 2, line 817)

(32) **GN:** `He'll be nervous, Paul Pogba.` (Appendix 1, line 657)

(33) **JC:** `But he has looked razor sharp in his last two games,`
`not all about the goals, Mo Salah.`
(Appendix 2, lines 110-112)

The communicative function of even-related commentary in sentence (34), (35) and (36) below was strategy, which was characterised by a strategic discussion of players or coaches (Reaser 306). The on-pitch event in (34) was that Manchester United had a free-kick, which made it a dead-ball situation. Jamie Carragher provided the information that Manchester United player Lingard was positioned in a dangerous area, and then uttered the sentence in (34). *Liverpool* operated as a co-referential of the NP, which made the sentence a RD. Moreover, the dislocated *Liverpool* could be understood as having a discourse function of resolving referential ambiguity due to the usage of *they* in the NP of the main clause. The same syntactic operation was found in (35), where *Liverpool* served as a constituent to *they*, although in this case with a contraction of the auxiliary verb *have*. In similar fashion to (34), the usage of *Liverpool* in (35) indicated that the sentence contained a RD structure. However, it is arguable that the discourse function in this sentence was different from the former. This is due to the context of commentary which was that Liverpool had scored a goal and Jamie Carragher was providing his opinions on the match situation. A significant intonational prominence was evident in this commentary and one can therefore argue that this was a function of emphasis since "they are characterised by being stressed and by the emotional involvement of the speaker" (Callies & Levin 2019). In sentence (36), Gary Neville was giving his verdict on the possibility of Manchester United player Paul Pogba receiving a red card. Although this SAT communicative function could be perceived as recap because the utterance was given during an *instant replay* (Reaser 320), it is also arguable to categorise the utterance as strategy. This is due to the strategical commentary of Neville's claim that Pogba could not avoid the tackle due to the fact that he did not have *a leg to stand on*. In similarity with the examples in (34) and (35), the placement of *Paul Pogba* served as a referent to contracted pronoun *he's* thus

making it a RD. The dislocated *Paul Pogba* operated as an add-on due to the lack of referential ambiguity and emphasis.

(34) **JC:** `They gotta be careful with Lingard here, Liverpool.`
(Appendix 2, line 618)

(35) **JC:** `They've been poor in the second half, Liverpool.`
(Appendix 2, lines 693-694)

(36) **GN:** `I don't think he's got a leg to stand on, Paul Pogba`
(Appendix 1, line 661)

6 Discussion

This chapter will discuss the research questions which were posed in chapter 1 of this thesis. These questions were as follows:

1. How are on-pitch events critical in the linguistic output of football commentators?
2. Is there any correlation between the commentator's usage of holophrastic utterances and the football metric xG?
3. How is the formulaic language utilised by the commentator in goal-scoring events and are there any correlations to xG?
4. What are syntactic features of the SAT in events with high-time pressure?

The findings in chapter 5 will serve as a basis for the discussion of the abovementioned research questions. Firstly, the holophrastic utterances in the event type shot and their relation to xG will be discussed. The second section will discuss time expressions and their relation to formulaic language. The third section will discuss the formulaic routines in the event type shot. The fourth section will discuss the usage of *here's* as a formulaic routine in high-time pressure events. Ultimately, the commentator's usage of right dislocation and its relation to time pressure will be elaborated.

6.1 Holophrastic Utterances in the Event Type "Shot" and its Relation to xG

As research question number 2 suggested, this thesis sought to investigate whether there was any correlation between holophrastic utterances and the football metric xG in the SAT of football commentators. The results of the overall usage holophrastic utterances in both matches differed significantly. As displayed in Table 8, which presented the results from Appendix 1, a total of 37 holophrastic utterances were used by the commentator. A similar number was found in Mackenzie's (2005) findings in attacking situations. Here, the overall number of frequencies was 40 holophrastic utterances. Although there was a small demarcation between these, one can argue that there are limitations in establishing a definite comparison between the two. As mentioned in section 3.1, Mackenzie (2005) used the match between Arsenal FC and Newcastle

United on the 23rd of March 2002, which ultimately ended 3-0 in Arsenal's favour[6]. The xG metric was non-existent in football at this period in time. A similar outcome can therefore be regarded as inconceivable to establish a comparative analysis between holophrastic utterances and xG. However, it is arguable that the two findings are comparable in terms of overall frequency.

A similar notion was found in Table 9 and Table 11 regarding the development of holophrastic usage in the first and second half of the matches. Notably, there was a decline in holophrastic usage in both matches in the second half. In the first match, only 16.22% of the total holophrastic usage was uttered whilst the second match provided 35.71% of holophrastic usage in the second half. One can argue that a reason for this declining development was due to the lack of chances in the second halves of both matches, which thus eased the time-pressure aspect of the commentator. However, Balzer-Siber (2015) argues that: "In soccer commentary, for instance, the discourse structure requires more colouring in the first half to create the narrative of the match. In the second half, on the other hand, stretches of silence are more frequent and acceptable when announcers let the game speak for itself" (8). As mentioned in section 3.5, DeNu (2010) argued that the commentators' reluctance to fill every moment with speech is a standard trait among European commentators (258). In addition, there was an evident decline in the xG numbers in the second halves of both matches. More precisely, there was a 1.63xG reduction in the accumulated shots in the second half of the first match. In the second match, there was a notable 0.82xG reduction. It was therefore possible to discern that there was a conspicuous decline in the quality and quantity of shots in the second halves of both matches. Due to the similar development of holophrastic usage, one can therefore argue that there is a correlation between the two. Consequently, one can assert that DeNu's (2010) description of standardised features in European commentary can serve as a basis for the declining development of holophrastic usage in both matches. Additionally, it is pertinent to ascertain that there was a correlation between xG and holophrastic usage in the SAT, where the commentator can be perceived as having less time pressure. When there was a reduction of events that caused time pressure, most preferably shots and goals, the commentator would be less impelled to utilise holophrastic utterances.

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[6] Arsenal vs. Newcastle United, 23rd of March 2002 https://www.11v11.com/matches/arsenal-v-newcastle-united-23-march-2002-11851/ Accessed 16th of April 2023.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were utilised in order to establish whether there was a possible correlation between holophrastic usage and xG. As elaborated in section 5.1.1, there was indeed a significant difference in holophrastic usage in the two matches analysed for this study. Table 8 presented the holophrastic usage in Appendix 1, the overall frequency displayed 37 instances with the accumulated xG of shots at 5.39. It is arguable that this xG can be perceived as a relatively high number. The frequency of shots, which was 31, in that respective match demonstrated that it included numerous events which ultimately would impact the commentator's linguistic output. This was evident through the frequent usage of holophrastic utterances.

One of the foundations for the selection of these two matches was the comparative aspect. More precisely, the matches were relatively similar in the end results, where both matches were won by Liverpool FC with a margin of 5-0 and 4-0. However, the holophrastic frequency and accumulated xG of individual shots differed remarkably from the results in Appendix 1. In Table 10, there was an overall frequency of 14 instances of holophrastic utterances whilst the accumulated xG of the individual shots was 2.36. Due to the remarkable demarcation of frequencies and xG numbers in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, it is possible to argue that there is a correlation between the usage of holophrastic utterances in the SAT of football commentators and the xG numbers in football matches. This argument is in conjunction with Mackenzie's (2005) predicament that "there is a correlation between the grammatical complexity of commentators' utterances and the degree of time pressure under which they are operating at any specific juncture of the broadcast" (114). More specifically, holophrastic utterances can be perceived as a grammatical incomplexity due to their restrictive nature. Moreover, this study estimated that shots are the event types that cause the most pressure on the commentator. Accordingly, one can argue that shots can be perceived as a specific juncture which therefore influences the grammatical complexity of the commentator.

Another hypothesis for this thesis was that it was determined that holophrastic utterances had a correlation with the xG of the respective shots. More precisely, it was assumed that the higher the xG rate, the more holophrastic utterances were produced by the commentator. This hypothesis was established due to the prediction that the more likely the chance would end up as a goal, the more syntactic restrictions would appear. However, Table 8 provided the information that this was not the case. Herein, as one could investigate from Table 8, the shot with the most instances of holophrastic utterances (9 instances), only provided

an xG number of 0.01. Another example supporting the lacking correlation between the frequency of holophrastic formulations and shot xG was found in shot number 7. In this instance, there was only one occurrence of a holophrastic utterance in a shot with a remarkable 0.81xG. However, one can argue that there was an omnipresence of holophrastic utterances in goal-scoring events. In Table 10, which represented the results from Appendix 2, it was possible to discern that there was a prevalence of holophrastic utterances in every goal situation. From the results in Tables 8 and 10, one can thus argue that there is a correlation between holophrastic utterances in goal-scoring events. However, it is arguable that the xG number of each individual shot enhances the frequency of holophrastic utterances.

An inherent finding in section 5.2.1 concerning the distribution of holophrastic utterances and their functions was that there was indeed a dominance of player name utterances. Mackenzie (2005) explains that a vital factor in IFG analysis is that "each discourse act consists of at least one *subact*, including – crucially – the focal subact that represents the core of what the speaker intends to communicate" (118). In that sense, holophrastic utterances are perceived as discourse acts in the same manner as e.g., phrases or clauses. It was therefore possible to ascertain that the verbalisations of player names in event type shots operated as holophrastic utterances. In IFG terms, the usage of player names as holophrastic utterances included focal subacts of reference. This is due to their nature of evoking a referent and provision of new information. When a rapid succession of play appears goalmouth, the commentator is inclined to describe the actions. However, due to time restrictions, the commentator would only utter the player's name as a function of describing each player's involvement in the build-up play. This was evident in shot number 9 in Table 8, where a total of 9 holophrastic utterances represented the players who were involved in the play leading up to the shot.

6.2 Time Expressions

The most notable finding in the top 20 3-4 grams in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 was that expressions relating to time were frequently used. It is important to note that there is a significant difference between time expression terms and expressions related to time pressure. The former represents words and phrases related to time. On the other hand, the latter depicts words and phrases that are verbalised in moments where there is significant time pressure on

the person speaking. The time expressions elaborated upon with special emphasis in section 5.1.3 were *first* and *second half,* and *moment*. As explained in the same section, it is important to note that these expressions were complemented by articles or determiners, although these were not displayed in Table 17.

Ebeling (2019) asserts frequent time expressions as an important feature of match reports in her comparative analysis using English and Norwegian corpora. Although her research was conducted using written match reports, one can argue that the feature of time expressions is recurrent in the SAT as well. Based on section 4.4.3 concerning the inclusion of a comparative corpus, one can argue that it is applicable to compare the SAT register to football match reports when it comes to terms and phrases. Moreover, she explains that this is an important feature that is utilised to specify when the action takes place (Ebeling 45). Due to the prevalence of time expressions in the top 20 3-4 grams in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, it is possible to assert that these expressions serve as an inherent function to specify an event with reference to a specific time in the match. Furthermore, one can argue that these operate to keep track of the progression of the game, e.g., how many minutes there are left until the half time break. In addition, one can argue that the aforestated time expressions serve as a retrospective aspect as well. An example of utilising a time expression with a retrospective sense is *Manchester United had good chances in the first half against Atalanta* (Appendix 1, lines 247-248). Here, the commentator refers to an earlier event by the usage of *in the first half*.

Another finding from the usage of time expressions in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 was the difference in usage between the play-by-play commentator and colour commentator. As mentioned in section 5.1.3, a significant finding was that colour-commentator Gary Neville's utterances of *moment* represented over half of the total frequencies of this time expression. It is arguable that the frequent usage of this time expression is due to his role of colouring "it through evaluative statements or statements that provide background information or details about strategy" (Reaser 307). In simpler terms, the frequent usage can be justified by their role as adding evaluations and strategical input to the broadcast as opposed to the play-by-play commentator, whose primary role is to narrate the ongoing events on the pitch. The communicative functions of the SAT were discussed in section 2.2.2, and it has been asserted that there are notions of time constraints attached to the different modes of commentary. In terms of time pressure, one can argue that the use of time expressions does not have any significant prevalence in time-critical events in the matches. This is realised by the results

presented in section 5.1.3, where there is a prominence of time expressions in the SAT of colour-commentators. The commentators assigned to this role are rarely subjected to high-time pressure situations. This is due to their primary communicative role in providing strategical and evaluative input after a significant event has occurred on the pitch. Although their role serves as an inherent part of the narration of football, their verbalisations are scarcely produced in events that promote time-critical utterances. In opposition, the play-by-play commentator is inclined to produce these time-critical utterances more frequently. Although the play-by-play commentator produces a significant number of time expressions in their narration, one can debate that it is a more frequent aspect in the register of colour-commentators.

6.3 Formulaic Routines in Event Type "Goals"

Research has demonstrated that play-by-play commentary in sports broadcasts comprises of routine sequences of language (Ferguson 1983, Kuiper 1996, Reaser 2003). Moreover, Levin (2008) argued that metonymic and metaphoric links are indeed register markers that are ubiquitous in football reporting. It is important to note that register markers are linguistic features specific to that respective register and that these features can be perceived as idiosyncratic to this specific register (Biber & Conrad 53). One can therefore argue that these linguistic features are characteristic of the target register. In terms of the register of football commentary, or the SAT, there are debates within academia on whether the formulaic language uttered by the commentators derives from ready-made constructions or if these were processed grammatically.

In FDG and IFG terms, the grammatical component of the NLU comprises of the four different levels *interpersonal, representational, structural* and *phonological*. As discerned in section 2.4.2, Mackenzie (2005) differentiates between the operations of FDG and IFG in that the latter "assume that discourse is shown at the interpersonal level as consisting minimally of a number of *moves* which occur in chronological succession" (117). Wray (2002) argues that there is a notion of ungrammaticality in terms of the functions of discourse acts. More precisely, one can argue that one cannot determine holophrastic utterances as grammaticalised discourse acts because "each of these is a ready-made sequence of words that can be used as a whole with a single function in the discourse" (Mackenzie 2005). In addition, this notion applies to

the production of certain phrases, where they are stored from memory and ready to be used in apt settings.

Although the holophrastic utterances can be perceived as formulaic constructions, this study affirms that formulaic sequences in high time pressure events are realised by other linguistic features in the SAT. As elaborated in section 5.2.3, the results in Tables 20 and 21 present the on-line utterances, or action description, of the goal-scoring events in both Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. In addition, a summative description was provided after each goal. These descriptions could be categorised to several communicative functions of Reaser (2003) (see section 2.2.2). It is arguable that the findings in Tables 20 and 21 demonstrate a frequent syntactic formulation which is characteristic in the descriptions of goal-scoring events. The syntactic formulation consists of significant syntactic restrictions where the usage of player names as holophrastic utterances is omnipresent. Moreover, the holophrastic usage of player names is usually followed by a goal-scoring event. The summative descriptions of the goal-scoring event are frequently complemented by notions of wordplay or formulaic sequences. A notable example of word play is evident in goal number 2 in Table 20 (see section 5.2.3), where the commentator articulates a homophone in *and it's two easy*, which is realised by the intonational prominence in the articulation of *two*. By the addition of *easy*, the phrase is assigned to another communicate function. In this case, the communicative function goes from *report* to *evaluation*. In simpler terms, the linguistic finesse and wittiness of the commentator in these settings bolster their identity status which ultimately gains their popularity among fans.

In addition to occurrences of homophones, Tables 20 and 21 present the play-by-play usage of metonymic and metaphoric links. The utilisation of the PIE indicated that there are definite phrases and words that were uttered by the commentator which were found in football reports in the comparative corpus. In comparison to Levin (2008), who argued that metonymic links were the most prominent of the two in regard to goal-scoring events, it is arguable that both metonymic and metaphoric links are present in the findings of this study. A notable finding in Tables 20 and 21 was the prevalence of lexical and numerical repetition. More precisely, the play-by-play commentator would articulate phrases where certain words were repeated within a single phrase or repeated in a following phrase. In the sense of Wray (2002), one can argue that stylistic repetition "is dedicated to aiding the hearer's decoding, by directing attention and reinforcing particular aspects in the content" (93). An example of this is prevalent in goal number 4 in Table 20 with the use of *shake of the head* and *shake up his team*. As

elaborated in section 5.2.3, *shake up his team* is a metonymic link where the usage of *shake* represents the meaning that the manager should make his team play better. It is arguable that the precedented phrase *shake of the head*, which depicted Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjær, serves as a fundament for the play-by-play commentator to follow up with a metonymic link. One can argue that this choice of articulation is not a part of unplanned speech due the unpredictability of camera focus throughout the broadcast. Due to this unpredictability, it is therefore discernible that the commentator utilises unplanned metonymic phrases dependent on what is displayed in the frame.

In addition to lexical repetitions, there are significant instances of numerical repetitions in Tables 20 and 21. More precisely, there are occurrences where the commentator verbalises numbers repeatedly after a goal-scoring event. An example of this is to be found in goal number 5 in Table 20 with *it's five inside five minutes*. In similarity with the lexical repetition of *shake* above, one can argue that this repetition is unplanned due to the inconceivable act of predicting when a goal is scored. However, a notable factor of the aforestated repetition is its reference to temporality. Numerical repetitions related to temporality are also present in goal number 4 in Table 21 with *five at Old Trafford, four at Anfield and still more than five minutes to go*. The first two numerical expressions *five* and *four* refer to the number of goals scored in that current match and the previous match. The last phrase, *five minutes to go*, refers to the remaining time of the match. As elaborated in section 5.2.3, the phrase *minutes to go* was found with prominent links to football reports in the PIE corpus. Moreover, one can argue that there is a prevalence of time expressions in the commentator's utterances in goal-scoring events. However, a final example of numerical repetition is present in goal number 3 in Table 20 with: *ten out of ten*. As previously discerned, this refers to the evaluation of Liverpool player Mohammed Salah's performance on the pitch. In other words, *ten out of ten* operates not only as a metaphoric link, but also as a ready-made construction. In this way, there was a prevalence of both numerical and lexical phrases in the goal-scoring events in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. One can argue that the phrases found in the PIE can be regarded as formulaic constructions related to the football lexis. However, time expressions which are produced grammatically were evident as well, which gives the impression that referring to time is indeed recurring in the goal-scoring events

As demonstrated above, certain formulaic phrases are indeed linked to the football lexis, which was ascertained by the findings in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. However, one of the research questions of this thesis was whether there were any links to formulaic usage and the formulaic language in goal-scoring events. Based on the results from Tables 20 and 21, there were no prominence in frequency of formulaic sequences in the goals with higher xG compared to the goals with a lower xG. Thus, one can determine the correlation between the frequency of formulaic usage in relation to xG of goal-scoring events as arbitrary. Although there is an arbitrary frequency, one can still argue that there is indeed a prevalence of formulaic usage in these events.

6.4 *Here's* as a Formulaic Routine in High Time Pressure Events

According to Weissenborn & Klein (1982), "natural language is always used in certain situations — at a certain time and at a certain place by people who share a great deal of both situational perception and general knowledge" (1). It is therefore discernible that natural language production is largely influenced by contextual factors. Fretheim et al. (2011) argue that usage of *here* can be understood in three different ways: as a token-reflexive, anaphoric or deictic expression (239). Of the three, the usage of *here* as a deictic expression can be understood as the most relevant in terms of the findings of this study. More generally, the situational context has major importance in natural language production. The linguistic devices that indicate contextuality are thus inherent. Weissenborn & Klein (1982) assert that deixis is the most salient of these devices and that these "have a shifting meaning, depending on when, where, and by whom they are used" (2). In order to comprehend the syntactic operations of the *here* usage, it is inherent to observe its placement in the utterance. According to Fretheim et al. "a token of *here* […] that appears initially in an utterance prepares the hearer for a resolution of its intended reference that depends on the interpretation of an extra-linguistic sensory stimulus" (255). In simpler terms, a provided context is necessary to understand the meaning of the deictic expression. In the case of this study, the visual representation of the broadcast was thus inherent to investigate the functions of *here.* Moreover, this study aims its scope on the usage of *here's* in sentence-initial position, which is a deictic *here* contracted with the copula *is*. Fretheim et al. emphasise the inherence of the copula verb in these variations as it "freely permits the subject–verb inversion pattern […] which again causes the subject noun

phrase to end up in the sentence-final focus position" (256). This notion of subject-inversion was evident in the findings of this study, where *here's* was succeeded by a player name operating as the subject.

In similar fashion to the frequent syntactic formulations of holophrastic utterances and formulaic language in goal-scoring events, the usage of *here's* operates as a routine element in high time pressure events. This phrasal element was only assigned to the play-by-play commentator, who inhabits the narrative role of the football match. Furthermore, a recurrent syntactic structure in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 was that usage of *here's* was complemented by a player name in high time pressure events. This was possible to discern by investigating the results in Tables 13 and 14. Importantly, the tables provided the frequency of *here's* in accordance with the match situations *defense, midfield* and *attack*. The inclination for investigating the usage of *here's* in relation to the match situations is namely to establish the time pressure element. As elaborated in section 5.1.2, utterances assigned to the match situation *defense* are regarded produced under low time pressure, utterances produced in *midfield* situations are produced under medium time pressure, and utterances produced in *attack* situations are regarded as high time pressure. The results from Tables 13 and 14 prove that there is a definite majority of *here's* + player name usage in *attack* situations. One can therefore argue that this syntactic formulation is omnipresent in situations where the commentator is under significant time pressure.

It is a debatable matter whether one can determine the usage of *here's* + player name as a holophrastic utterance. One can argue that due to the frequent usage of events that cause significant time pressure, it is conceivable to characterise the deictic combination a linguistic routine which is stored in memory. More specifically, the accessible nature of the utterance could be regarded as holophrastic. However, as elaborated in section 4.4.4, the *here's* + player name formulations could not be considered holophrastic due to their excessive subacts. As elaborated in section 2.4.3, an inherent condition for characterising an utterance as holophrastic was the inclusion of only one subact, either of reference or predication. *Here's* + player name consists of two subacts assigned to each respective word. It is therefore not conceivable to determine this phrase as holophrastic. However, one can perceive this construction as a formulaic routine. This is due to its accessibility of usage, in that the commentator would not need to articulate the sentence cognitively. In IFG terms, the utterance is ready at the phonological level, and when there are rapid successions of events on the pitch which

ultimately evoke time pressure, the commentator is able to use this construction without interference at the grammatical level.

6.4.1 *Here's* + Player Name + Copula Deletion

A notable finding from Tables 18 and 19 was the prevalence of copula deletion after *here's* utterances. In the sense of Ferguson (1983), Balzer-Siber (2015), Reaser (2003) and Lewandowski (2012), the omission of copula verbs is an omnipresent syntactic phenomenon in the SAT register. To elaborate further, Ferguson (1983) argued that copula deletion is limited in its conditions of occurrence, although "it takes place most often after a single-word proper name at the beginning of a sentence, typically the name of the player" (159). In contrast to the claim that copula deletion is a characteristic aspect in high time pressure situations, Reaser (2003) points to the fact that "copula absence occurs in all game situations may indicate that this feature is indeed a conventional aspect of the register and not necessarily functional for all game situations" (313). Thus, Reaser (2003) claims that the functionality of copula deletion is thus a syntactic aspect that is present in every game situation. This claim is thus supporting the fact that copula deletion would appear regardless of any extra-linguistic events that cause time pressure.

It is arguable that this omission is a marker of time pressure itself. On the one hand, it is plausible to suggest that the inclusion of copulas in sentences makes the sentence more grammatically correct. The conventional stance of FG entails that copulas are rather inserted than omitted in different genres and registers. On the other hand, in IFG terms, Mackenzie (2005) demonstrates that the case is different: "in IFG terms, the level at which such copula insertion would take place is simply bypassed" (125). In more detail, Mackenzie (2000) explicates the stance on copula inclusion: "the copula is meaningless, functionally, neither is required, but the presence of the one apparently calls for that of the other, in standard English finite clauses at least" (43). One can therefore assert that the omission of the copula in IFG terms is not regarded as a syntactic discrepancy. However, the IFG theory asserts that the copula has no inherent function in speech. One can argue that this stance on copula deletion supports IFG model's principle of temporal sequenced moves as opposed to grammatical correctness. In simpler terms, one can interpret the IFG stance of copula deletion as a simplification of an utterance. The temporally sequenced moves can be assimilated to the

ongoing events that the play-by-play commentator has the responsibility of narrating. Altogether, the results from this study demonstrated the syntactic prevalence of *here's* + player name + copula deletion in the SAT of football commentators.

6.5 Right Dislocation and Time Pressure

As elaborated in section 3.4, dislocation structures are perceived as misnomers in IFG analysis. A possible explanation for why RD and LD are neglected is due to the perception of moves and discourse acts. To illustrate this point, IFG theory would provide a different interpretation of this extract from section 5.2.4: *He's a lucky boy, Keita* (Appendix 2, line 817). In this sentence, the IFG conventions would regard the whole sentence to operate as one move containing two discourse acts. The first discourse act is found in the clause *he is a lucky boy*. The second discourse act is also the referential, which is *Keita,* which can be interpreted as a holophrastic utterance containing a focal subact of reference. Although Mackenzie (2005) states that dislocations are neglected in the IFG approach, there are no pertinent justifications for the omission. The most applicable argument is a reference to FG conventions of the Theme Predication construction where an "NP is uttered in one intonation group, followed by a clause in another, with at least a loose relation of relevance between the two" (125). Moreover, one can argue that there is another elaboration with a link to dislocation structures resolving referential ambiguity based on "how the commentator sometimes needs a few fractions of a second to recognize a player and […] divides the move into a two-act sequence" (Mackenzie 126). In this sense, the two act sequences contain one act describing the ongoing events, which can be characterised as action description in the sense of Reaser (2003). However, if there are any complications recognising the highlighted player, the commentator would have to resolve this ambiguity. One can therefore argue that RD structures have a confirmatory function primarily in resolving referential ambiguity in IFG theory, although Theme Predication is regarded as the proper term in the similar analysis.

One of the aims of analysing the dislocation structures in the SAT in this study was to ascertain whether there is a correlation with time pressure. As provided in section 5.2.4, occurrences of only RD were analysed. Although there were no quantitative results of total usage dislocations in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 provided in section 5.1, there was indeed a

majority of RD structures in both appendices. In addition, this finding was found in Callies & Levin's study, where they also decided to only use RD structures as a basis for presenting the different discourse functions. Different degrees of time pressure were asserted to the numerous communicative functions of Reaser (2003). The findings in section 5.2.4 proved that RD structures were indeed prevalent in communicative functions ranging from action descriptive, background, recap, evaluation and strategy. Due to the pervasiveness of RD in the different communicative functions, that is, the different modes of commentary related to the events on the pitch, one can argue that the syntactic phenomenon is not restricted to a certain degree of time pressure. More precisely, one can argue that RD is not utilised as a result of significant time pressure in the SAT. Balzer-Siber (2015), who investigated the usage of subject inversion in the SAT of Major League Soccer commentators, argued that "since the variable is detectable in all game situations, it must be expected to be rather conventionalized" (17). The same notion can be discerned in relation to RD as well, as it is observable in numerous match situations.

In the linguistic academia, there are numerous debates about the role of RD in the sentence. One of the frequent questions asked is whether the prevalence of RD in speech derives from grammatical competence or if it is connected to Universal Grammar (UG). Ott & De Vries (2016) provide their justification on this matter as "RD is the result of an interplay of the mechanisms of discourse grammar and sentence grammar: juxtaposition/coordination of clauses, anaphora and cataphora, A-movement, and clausal ellipsis" (687). In simpler terms, they argue that the phenomenon is dependent on the grammatical context, thereby not coinciding with the idea of RD usage deriving from UG's theories on innate grammatical competence. Their research sought to affirm that the RD structures in Germanic languages serve as deletion to the constituent clause on the left periphery. Whether the representation of RD operating as deletion in the findings of this study is questionable. On the one hand, one can argue that the core clause has independent functions in all of the extracted sentences in section 5.2.4. More precisely, the core clauses in the extracted sentences from section 5.2.4 do not need any dislocations in order to convey the meaning of the utterance. On the other hand, however, the individual discourse functions assigned to each sentence provide the idea that the RD structures have a significant purpose in the SAT of football commentators. The resolving referential ambiguity, emphasis and add-on functions of RD structures contribute to the commentator's fluency in a pressurised linguistic setting.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to investigate various syntactic elements in the SAT of football commentators and to discern whether there are any prevalent notions of time pressure related to these elements. Additionally, the statistical metric xG was implemented as a comparative factor in order to bring the linguistic output of the commentator and the ongoing actions on the pitch to a closer level. The matches utilised for this study were both fixtures between Manchester United and Liverpool FC in the 2021/2022 season. Using the theories of IFG, which seeks to interpret language as a temporal sequence of moves and discourse acts, several fascinating findings were identified. As aforestated in chapters 1 and 6, this thesis sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How are on-pitch events critical in the linguistic output of football commentators?
2. Is there any correlation between the commentator's usage of holophrastic utterances and the football metric xG?
3. How is formulaic language utilised by the commentator in goal-scoring events and are there any correlations to xG?
4. What are syntactic features of the SAT in events with high-time pressure?

Based on the findings of this study, a correlation between the play-by-play commentator's usage of holophrastic utterances and the statistical metric xG was found. This was established in the quantitative approach, where the match with the most frequent usage of holophrastic utterances included the highest xG of the two. In addition, the similar reduction in both holophrastic utterances and xG numbers in the second halves established their correlation. However, there was no correlation found between the two factors on the sentence level. More precisely, the qualitative approach demonstrated the fact that frequency of holophrastic usage was not connected to the xG of the shots. To answer the research question, it is discernible to suggest that there are definite correlations between the frequency of holophrastic utterances and the xG quantitatively, but not qualitatively.

The prevalence and functions of time expressions in the SAT were discussed, and it was asserted that time expressions are indeed common features in the target register. Frequent expressions like *first half* or *second half* and *moment* specified when an action took place in the match. Moreover, one can argue that the utilisation of time expressions helps the

commentator in keeping track of the game's progression. Moreover, an interesting finding was that different commentators have contrasting frequencies of time expressions, with colour-commentators using them more often to add evaluative and strategic input to the broadcast. More specifically, time expressions are not prevalent in time-critical situations but rather more frequently used in the colour-commentator's register. Overall, time expressions are a fundamental part of the SAT register, providing important temporal and strategic context to the narration of football matches. However, their relation to time-criticality is not evident, as these are used in both unpressurised and pressurised events.

The analysis of the formulaic routines in event type "goal" affirmed the frequent structure of player name operating as holophrastic utterances + goal + formulaic sequences. The structure ratifies the hypothesis that the play-by-play commentator is more pressured in the attacking events leading up to a goal. While Levin (2008) ascertained the link between metonymy in goal-scoring events, and metaphors as linked to time expressions, both of these were used interchangeably in the goal-scoring events. More precisely, both metonymic and metaphoric links were used by the play-by-play commentator in this setting, although in an arbitrary manner. In addition, there was a significant prevalence of lexical and numerical repetitions. The usage of lexical and numerical repetitions is used either to refer to time, which represent the communicative function of report, and to player performance, giving an evaluation. To answer the research question, the findings showed that there was no prominent link to the usage of formulaic language and xG in the goal-scoring events. However, it is indisputable that usage of different formulaic features displays the linguistic finesse and wittiness of the commentator, which ultimately bolsters their identity.

Situational context is indeed important in natural language, and the usage of *here* operates as a deictic expression in the SAT of football commentary. Weissenborg & Klein (1982) assert the claim that situational context is inherent in deictic *here* usage. The situational context, or extra-linguistic events, can be perceived as the events unfolding on the football pitch. This study focused especially on the usage of deictic *here* contracted with the copula *is* in high-pressure football events. Based on the findings, it was declared that the formulation *here's* + player name operates as a routine element and is only uttered by the play-by-play commentator. Furthermore, a continuation of this syntactic formulation is evident with the addition of copula deletion to its armature. This can be considered a formulaic routine due to its accessibility of usage. The discussion of *here's* usage in the SAT of football commentators

is linked to the research question about syntactic features in high-time pressure. The findings and discussion of *here's* usage in the SAT of the play-by-play commentator proved that there was indeed a correlation between this usage and time pressure, where a substantial frequency of *here's* utterances were verbalised in attack situations.

The syntactic aspect analysed was the prevalence of dislocation structures in the SAT and whether there are any connections to time pressure. Based on the findings, it was clear that the RD structures were predominant as opposed to LD structures. It was evident that RD structures were used with the communicative functions ranging from action descriptive, background, recap, evaluation and strategy. In addition, the discourse functions by Callies & Levin (2019) of resolving referential ambiguity, emphasis and add-on were investigated in the RD structures. It was argued that RD structures are not particularly restricted to a certain degree of time pressure due to their presence in a myriad of game situations. The linguistic academia is divided on the role of dislocation in the sentence, and some argue that it is dependent on the grammatical context, while others argue that it is connected to UG. The prevalence of RD is connected to the research question about syntactic features in high-time pressure. Altogether, this study suggests that RD structures have a significant purpose in the SAT of football commentary, contributing to their fluency in both pressurised and unpressurised linguistic settings.

This thesis does not only establish the prevalence of time pressure in the SAT of football commentators, but also incorporates modern statistical metrics which are used in football broadcasts. The prevalence of holophrastic utterances and deictic formulations in high time pressure events proved that the commentators utilise certain constructions in these situations. In IFG terms, one can affirm that these are not produced grammatically, but are rather ready at the phonological level to be uttered. In simpler terms, one can regard these as formulaic constructions which are routinised in the SAT of football commentators.

7.1 Relevance

The research conducted for this MA thesis has provided valuable insights into the correlation between syntactic structures and the degree of time pressure in the SAT of football

commentary. Over the last few decades, the opportunity of broadcasting football has indeed been increased. Beek et al. (2018) argue that there has been improvement and facilitation of broadcasting football throughout the world due to digital globalisation: "The opportunities to connect the world with live streams of football games shifted the model of free public viewing on television to the first types of decoded pay-tv" (24). As a result of the global digitalisation of football, one can assert that this has brought many viewers. Correspondingly, the myriad of viewers of this global game are exposed to the SAT register on a weekly basis. Inasmuch, one can argue that the SAT register of football commentary is communicated to millions of people worldwide. The globalisation and vast exposure of football are thus valid reasons to conduct research within this field.

This thesis compared statistical metrics with the syntactic aspects of the commentator as a basis for research. More precisely, the xG value of each shot was compared to the usage of holophrastic utterances, and the xG of the goal-scoring events were compared to the formulaic usage of the commentator. One can argue that implementing modern statistical metrics as the xG model, which is still in its early stages, as a basis for syntactic research bring the game and linguistic output of the commentator closer. Namely, it is justifiable to assert that this procedure paves the way for an authentic approach to analysing the degrees of time pressure in the SAT of football commentators.

7.2 Outlook

As frequently exclaimed, a limitation of this study was the small size of corpus. A reason for this was the process of transcribing the utterances of the commentators. Although a somewhat automated method was utilised, there was still a necessity to review and edit the given transcriptions. Ultimately, this process has proven to be time-consuming. During the production of this thesis, there has been an amelioration and advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The advancement of the AI tools can therefore facilitate the processes of transcription, which was indeed a limitation in this study. Furthermore, the possibility of compiling a comprehensive corpus will thus be more likely to achieve. If one were able to enact a larger corpus of the SAT register, one would be able to reach more solid conclusions within a field that needs more research. According to Callies & Levin (2019) "the compilation and exploitation of multimodal spoken corpora that integrate and align text, audio, and video should

be put more explicitly on the agenda of (English) corpus linguistics […] to create new digitized collections of language and communication-related material that draw on more than one modality" (267). A large corpus including transcriptions from numerous matches yields possibilities for further research of the SAT register of football commentary. A more detailed account of the correlation between holophrastic utterances and the xG of shots is possible to achieve with a larger corpus. With an abundance of data material available, one could discern whether there is more holophrastic prevalence in goal-scoring events compared to individual shots. It was presupposed that holophrastic utterances were used more in goal-scoring events due to their nature of including a higher xG rate. However, as experienced throughout the research procedure, it was established that this was not always the case. Nevertheless, it is conceivable that different results can arise when dealing with a larger corpus.

This thesis utilised theories of syntax to determine and on-pitch events to discern whether the commentator was in a pressurised linguistic situation. Although this thesis presented several instances of alleged time-critical utterances, one can argue that the findings were not fully transparent. Research conducted by Slavich et al. (2019) utilised software programs and AI to analyse "several features of speech and speech acoustics, including pitch, jitter, energy, rate and length and number of pauses" (1). Although the purpose of their study was to assess stress levels in relation to the medical field, one can argue that similar methods could be used in SAT research. Using equipment that could gauge the levels of pressure of the commentator in the different events in a football match, and further analyse the syntactic structure in those events, could bolster the claim that commentators are subject to time pressure. Although there are numerous possibilities for further research within the field of football commentary, one can argue that this thesis is unique in terms of utilising in-game statistics in correlation with the syntax of commentators. Ultimately, the in-game statistics justify the commentator's syntactic constraints and evidently bring the linguistic output closer to the game.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Transcription of Manchester United vs Liverpool FC October 24th, 2021.

Event: Manchester United vs Liverpool FC October 24th, 2021.

Result: 0-5

Venue: Old Trafford, Manchester.

Commentators:

MT: Martin Tyler

GN: Gary Neville

JC: Jamie Carragher

1 **MT:** So both teams on the back of thrilling three-two wins in the
2 Champions League. And since the last time Liverpool stepped out of
3 Old Trafford, they've scored a remarkable thirty-four goals in their
4 ten away games starting with four here on that Thursday evening,
5 back in May. Here is Konaté looking for Jota, the two players
6 brought in by Jürgen Klopp. van Dijk. Lovely playing surface, a very
7 mild Sunday afternoon. And all the ingredients for potential
8 classic. About it, Jamie here, but just seen, I've seen Liverpool go
9 into every away stadium around the country and plenty in Europe and
10 beyond as well. But when they come here, there's always a different
11 look on their faces when they get off the bus and come down that
12 tunnel.
13 **JC:** Yeah, it's not just this Liverpool team. Keep it fair that even
14 some of Graeme's teams, one of the best Liverpool teams we've seen
15 have found it difficult to come to Old Trafford and get results.
16 That is a tough place to come no matter what form or state
17 Manchester United are in.
18 **MT:** And what state they're in, you never really know these days. And
19 back to, comeback against Atalanta, rather sum them up. And Ole
20 Gunnar Solskjær sometimes vulnerable, but then irresistible and
21 often irresistible, just in the nick of time. And here is Trent
22 Alexander-Arnold, trying to find the feet of Firmino.
23 **JC:** I think that was a snapshot of the game early on, Gary, there
24 with Liverpool lose the ball, Manchester United look at the
25 counter.
26 **GN:** I think the, if you will, sit a little bit deeper in this game.
27 Try to counter it through Fred and McTominay ()
28 **MT:** Out by Maguire with the back pass every touch early on. Would be
29 affected by tension, however experienced the players are. This is
30 something a little bit different, something very special. Luke Shaw.
31 Greenwood. Now Maguire. Liverpool unbeaten in eight, eighteen
32 Premier League games. Twenty-one in all competitions. Manchester

33 United could be in here. It comes to Bruno Fernandes, who lines it
34 up and blasts it wide. The slick pacy move and face might be the
35 order of the day to get at Liverpool. No finish.
36 **GN:** That is a massive chance. That is good work over on that far
37 side from Rashford and, Konaté, that's a strange little clearance.
38 Fred intercepts and placing forward first time it's perfect from
39 Ronaldo and Mason Greenwood and Bruno Fernandes. Wild on the
40 finish.
41 **MT:** Here's Robertson. () back to front foot now Liverpool. Jota. Who
42 played six times for Wolves and Liverpool against Manchester United.
43 Never been on the losing side, scored three goals. Jota. Firmino.
44 Salah, playing central. And he's played Naby Keita in here, and
45 Liverpool do take their early chance. Well, he's rolled it in and
46 rolled out a booster here, for the away team.
47 **GN:** Well, I have to say the decision of Wan-Bissaka and Greenwood to
48 go on this side was really bad. All of a sudden, Manchester United
49 nowhere near it allows Liverpool to create an overload on the far
50 side, and Salah, can he find the pass? He does. It's absolutely
51 perfect. The weight of the pass, the accuracy and Keita does what
52 Fernandes couldn't do at the other end, he slides it past David De
53 Gea, what a start for Liverpool.
54 **MT:** Naby Keita, who got an excellent goal in Madrid and then was
55 culpable in the two that Atletico got and got subbed at half time.
56 They've stuck with him and he's on the scoresheet again for Jürgen
57 Klopp.
58 **GN:** Well, Manchester United's pressing has been the talk of the last
59 couple of weeks, but the decision by Greenwood to go to Van Dijk and
60 then Wan-Bissaka to go to Robertson. Nowhere near Manchester United.
61 Can't do that against this Liverpool team. They just get pulled
62 apart.
63 **MT:** And now they are trying to get in behind Konaté.
64 **JC:** Well, it was something we highlighted wasn't it on the Monday
65 against Leicester, and you are not quite sure Manchester United when
66 they are pressing, and they get caught in again.
67 **MT:** Here's Keita, it's Firmino who's been forced a little bit wide
68 and the shot's close enough to De Gea. () and the ball hits Anthony
69 Taylor who is today's referee.
70 **JC:** It's Keita again stepping in. Fred loses the ball. Just a tight
71 angle really for Roberto Firmino, maybe. If he'd been on the other
72 side he would've worked the goalkeeper a lot more. And they would
73 have wanted a strong start here, Manchester United, they almost got
74 it through Fernandes.
75 **MT:** That's their way Gary, isn't it? Go behind and then...
76 **GN:** Well.
77 **MT:** … turn on the style.
78 **GN:** We've got plenty of time to do something about it, but if you
79 Liverpool at this moment in time, you're looking to go in for the
80 kill. Worrying moments for Ole Gunnar Solskjær.

81 **MT:** He asked for a strong start it's been rather the opposite,
82 although, as we have all seen, Bruno Fernandes could have made it a
83 strong start. Looked like the right player in the right position.
84 **GN:** It is something we highlighted earlier in the week, Mason
85 Greenwood not getting to the left centre back and then Wan-Bissaka
86 is late and all of a sudden you just getting stretched all over the
87 pitch. () right back. Maguire can't cover the ground and Luke Shaw
88 is just left exposed at the left back. Far too easy.
89 **MT:** Here's van Dijk. () is the confidence in recovery, that United
90 have had. They, it's nowhere near the teamwork of Liverpool, but
91 they do have great individual parts and here's Salah, the man of the
92 moment, and McTominay got back and others. No foul. And here's
93 Ronaldo, Greenwood trying to stay onside. And again, there's the
94 message from referee Taylor and Salah looks offside but the flag is
95 stayed down. We'll see what happens. Jota is in the middle. Salah
96 goes for goal, and the flag didn't go up. Goal kick.
97 **JC:** Well, I wanna talk about Naby Keita being in the team, but first
98 of all, look at Manchester United, they're always late, starts with
99 Greenwood, then Wan-Bissaka makes a poor decision. One after
100 another. Lindelöf one side and then just space everywhere and then
101 Mo Salah just waits for that perfect moment. Naby Keita. It's a
102 really good finish early on in this game at the Stretford End.
103 **MT:** In the end, after some thought, David De Gea played it a yard or
104 so. Milner. Lindelöf stepping in. Greenwood. Alisson's ball. Fred
105 wins it back. And the shot by Rashford is eh a very good record in
106 this fixture, particularly in this stadium. Against Liverpool.
107 **GN:** Yeah, the encouragement from Manchester United is that when they
108 do win the ball back, they look really dangerous. This time, it's
109 Rashford, he ignores the pass that he's got to his left. Alisson
110 always had it under control. It's not really a panic, just whoops it
111 past his post.
112 **MT:** Robertson. Jota. Wan-Bissaka, got his challenge in that time.
113 **JC:** You see Andy Robertson going forward there, Trent Alexander-
114 Arnold on the far side is still taking up really high positions. Not
115 too worried about Marcus Rashford, so it could be joy for either
116 team on that side.
117 **MT:** Konaté. It was 5-0 here with Leipzig ()the previous match in
118 this stadium. There he is again (). Robertson running out of room.
119 And was offered the Manchester United job and he was still working
120 at Dortmund at the time. It was a thorn in their side with the post
121 in the Premier League that he was able to accept. Maguire. Greenwood
122 trying to get the inside of Robertson, the ball was not quite long
123 enough. Konaté covering. Milner. Henderson. Able to make the tracks
124 into and through that Manchester United midfield. Alexander-Arnold
125 trying to do something similar. Robertson. Ole Gunnar Solskjær
126 pointing out that Liverpool are one of a number of teams that
127 Manchester United are trying to catch up with. () they could finish
128 above them in the Premier League table last week when we were set by

129 injuries and an extraordinary run of home defeats. And a mistake
130 here between Shaw and Maguire. Alexander Arnold and it's two, easy.
131 Diogo Jota. A tap-in. It's Manchester United nil, Liverpool two.
132 They're two down at home again.
133 **GN:** Two-nil at down or two-nil down at home against a different
134 level of team. The indecision between Maguire and Shaw. Really poor,
135 you actually think Keita lets them off the hook a little bit by
136 turning back but he doesn't because he gives it to a deadly accurate
137 crosser in Alexander-Arnold, who plays a magical pass across the
138 goal. There's a point here where Keita think to himself, why is he
139 not just take it on and hit it? But he pulls it back towards Salah
140 but plays it out to Alexander-Arnold and Liverpool and Jota, slide
141 it in the back post, but there's nothing as certain as Trent
142 Alexander Arnold playing that across the goal. If it wasn't Jota, it
143 would have been Milner.
144 **MT:** Milner might have been offside, but Jota wasn't. Milner wouldn't
145 have been either. Goal given, no reprieve for the Red Devils. Not
146 very devilish at the moment.
147 **JC:** Well, even in these first 14-15 minutes it was obvious. The
148 position Trent Alexander-Arnold was taken up. See where he's going
149 out to press Manchester United's full back there, Luke Shaw, there's
150 no holding back, but even though Marcus Rashford has caused them
151 problems in the past.
152 **GN:** Well, I can tell you now if you can't feel it at home. This
153 Manchester United team are getting put under enormous pressure from
154 the crowd.
155 **MT:** Here comes Bruno Fernandes. He's got runners either side, two to
156 the left. Ronaldo. Rashford. And ran into traffic.
157 **GN:** He saw Van Dijk and didn't want it, I don't think he almost
158 scared him. Just the thought of Van Dijk.
159 **MT:** There's been a blistering start from Liverpool. McTominay. And
160 Fred. They've been labouring to put up the screens that they're
161 picked to do really in front of the back four.
162 **GN:** As you say, it's been a blistering start from Liverpool, Martin,
163 but the hesitancy in Manchester United's defending.
164 **MT:** Has helped.
165 **GN:** Oh, contributed enormously.
166 **MT:** Shaw. Manchester United get a corner conceded by Konaté. They
167 badly need to get the next goal. Otherwise Liverpool could be out of
168 sight. Has extraordinary run of goal getting in away matches, not
169 halted here at Old Trafford. Maguire's in there and McTominay, a
170 tall man, it goes towards Maguire. Then it goes to McTominay who can
171 get it down but can't keep it down and the flag goes up in any
172 case.
173 **JC:** You see the lines there. I mean, it looked tighter now,
174 actually. When that ball came across. It was checked as all goals
175 are. If it were a case for Milner at the back post, it's actually a
176 really good finish down at full stretch.

177   **MT:** The man who's picked him, punches the air in celebration.
178   **JC:** I mean, you mentioned the Atalanta game, Martin. And what
179   Atalanta didn't do was really finish Manchester United off.
180   Manchester United will improve in this game, and you mentioned to me
181   before the game, Gary, you felt the early stages of this game,
182   Liverpool have got to really go for it and it feels like that now
183   the situation that they're in, go for that third goal.
184   **GN:** That's a massive problem for him. No goals against the
185   mentality. You can talk about Paul Pogba in midfield. We can talk
186   about McTominay and Fred, Ronaldo up front, not pressurising but
187   it's the whole group. Every single day they go into training. Really
188   think about no goals, no shots against making sure they win their
189   individual battles. You don't see it at this moment in time. And
190   their organisation, the press, which does come down to the coaching
191   team is nowhere near good enough.
192   **MT:** Konaté. Henderson. Out there is Trent Alexander-Arnold again. To
193   Salah. Keita. Alexander-Arnold slightly miscued, but you see the
194   belief, you can see the ability and the teamwork.
195   **GN:** It was () midweek being played back in Liverpool went two-nil
196   up...
197   **MT:** Ha ha yes.
198   **GN:** … it was United went two-nil down
199   **MT:** And playing from the back again, almost suicidal from Manchester
200   United. Ronaldo ends up with a pass with accuracy and cleverness as
201   well. Wan-Bissaka, back on his feet. In by Greenwood, and out by
202   Konaté. Collected by Bruno Fernandes and then rather rushed by
203   Ronaldo. As if he felt the urgency of the moment with a score line
204   like this.
205   **GN:** Well, they've had about two or three good moments, and like he
206   just said at the start of this game, Manchester United would have a
207   chance to Fernandes that felt like that one to Ronaldo. But at the
208   back. Well.
209   **MT:** Now just one point from their last nine available. The draw here
210   with Everton between the home defeat to Villa and the loss at
211   Leicester. Southgate, taking this one in. Harry Maguire has had
212   easier 20 minutes to Premier League games. There was a stat last
213   week, guys, that United faced 11 shots on target at Leicester, the
214   second most ever against them in the 20 years since those facts were
215   collated. That they've been in the face of an early bombardment,
216   again here from Liverpool. Jota gets the better of McTominay. ()
217   Lindelöf. Shaw, into the feet of Ronaldo. … been done … and better
218   closing down Liverpool are doing compared to the equivalent from
219   United. Maguire. It's not helping the nerves of the players, the
220   nerves of the Manchester United fans when this is going on, but they
221   work their way through the press this time. Rashford. Supported by
222   Fred. Supported by McTominay. Now Wan-Bissaka. Shaw. Out by Konaté.
223   Played by Fred. McTominay. Ronaldo, shrewd touch. McTominay again.
224   () for Liverpool. And United have to start from deeper but they

225 still got the ball. Wan-Bissaka. McTominay. Now Shaw. Could line one
226 up here and it's not too far away.
227 **GN**: Liverpool just drop a little deep and allow Manchester United to
228 play some passes across them and, in the end, Luke Shaw gets quite
229 close to goal. A little bit more desperation from Alisson that
230 time.
231 **MT**: Might be learning from his England rival, Ben Chilwell, who's
232 been really amongst the goals as Chelsea's left back. Only one for
233 England too, and then the last round of internationals. Robertson. …
234 Ahead of. Shaw. Halfway through the first half. Nearly got through
235 for Rashford.
236 **GN**: I think he was onside. Virgil van Dijk had gone back in on this
237 near side just playing him on.
238 **JC**: It's just a mix-up between Trent and Konaté, not quite sure he
239 was picking him up. When you mentioned about situation being the
240 same as midweek, two-nil down Manchester United, but like midweek,
241 it's still looking dangerous going forward.
242 **MT**: Salah. Now Henderson. Liverpool mistake and Ronaldo's off and
243 running. Konaté with the header and a decisive clearance. Rashford.
244 McTominay. Shaw has got into a good position, but it weren't so many
245 to pick out in the middle. Maguire. In by Rashford, too close to
246 Alisson but. Quite right, Jamie, what you said about the that
247 Manchester United had good chances in the first half against
248 Atalanta. Actually late on, Rashford hit the bar. It wasn't an
249 impotent first half from them. They were very poor defensively and
250 they've been lax in that respect. In the first quarter of the game
251 here, James Milner, who has been involved in the last couple of
252 games, and maybe a little bit of muscle fatigue. Curtis Jones has
253 only just proved his fitness and after an under twenty-one injury.
254 It's going to be needed here.
255 **JC**: well, just see that slip there, Martin. His calf just hit the
256 inside of his knee. Liverpool have got lots of numbers in midfield,
257 but there's a lot of them out at the moment injured guys...
258 **MT**: Tiago
259 **JC**: () Yeah. Fabinho missing today. Looks like Curtis Jones is gonna
260 come on. Just gotta be careful as well because this man went down as
261 well before () the first goal. A lot of talk with him coming into
262 the team. Really cool there, goalkeeper in top form, as I said at
263 that Stretford End, early in the game. That is just a mess in the
264 sense of the Manchester United defence. No conviction at all. They
265 think they've got away with it, but when you've got that quality of
266 that man out right back and the goal scoring form of this man since
267 he come into a Liverpool shirt. That is a huge problem.
268 **MT**: So an early exit for James Milner who hates not playing. Often
269 is cast in the role of his senior status as a substitute, but he's
270 been in the team but a little bit of a extra strain on ageing
271 muscles. Curtis Jones was involved in this fixture last season, by
272 the end of last season, where he set up Mo Salah's clinching goal,

273 four-two goal. Henderson. Thirty-five now, now coming up thirty-six.
274 Started as a sixteen-year-old at Leeds. Has had a fantastic career.
275 And Curtis Jones caught out straight away. And now Greenwood. Turns
276 left. And again for Rashford. Tries to whip it in.
277 **JC:** That's happened too often for Liverpool, made it too easy for
278 Manchester United to counterattack. Sooner or later, they will pay.
279 Keep giving them opportunities losing the ball in the middle of the
280 pitch.
281 **MT:** Fred. Turned quite quickly enough. It's been a good comeback,
282 he's been out until the substitute at Leicester when he came on and
283 scored and started here against that Atlanta and scored. And Ole
284 Gunnar Solskjær saying before that game not just that he is fit but
285 he is absolutely pain free after playing with niggles for quite a
286 long while. Lindelöf. And I remember if you watched () on Sky
287 Sports, he was injured in the recent Nations League final. Back in
288 front to that trophy. Rashford. Shaw, steaming up outside him. Was
289 lucky. Ronaldo who repositions, he hasn't scored with a header of
290 the Premier League yet this season Manchester United because he's
291 got a wonderful header, Cristiano Ronaldo to seal the 3-2 comeback
292 on Wednesday in the Champions League. Greenwood, space for the shot
293 and what a shot it was. It was harrowing right behind it from our
294 angle. To that far corner.
295 **GN:** Manchester United are actually playing some passes in the final
296 third and they are looking dangerous. Greenwood, Rashford, Luke Shaw
297 getting around the outside and Fernandes getting involved as well.
298 **MT:** Shaw's corner, towards Maguire. Doesn't reach the Manchester
299 United captain. Here goes Keita and Anthony Taylor was pretty close.
300 He saw nothing wrong. That's a kind of mistake that was happening
301 the first fifteen minutes. United have improved in their attacking
302 sense since then. Just got the crowd edgy and a little bit of
303 overplaying. Keita. Firmino. To Jota who could line one up here.
304 Alexander-Arnold gets it across. Keita. Henderson. Into that area
305 where there was a corridor of uncertainty. Corner.
306 **GN:** Jordan Henderson has made the wrong choice there. He should try
307 to drift into that power post, I think Firmino, had a lot of space.
308 Went for the whip.
309 **MT:** Alexander-Arnold to take the corner. Just over van Dijk. Fired
310 back by Keita. Firmino was coming in, it was a definite shot by
311 Keita. It nearly turned out to be a great pass.
312 **GN:** It's a big chance, you may see it late. It is coming fast, but I
313 think he goes to the instep rather the outside of his right foot.
314 Not quite sure of his technique there Firmino at the back post. I
315 think he has chance to be able to sort of open up his instep, get
316 more of a contact on it.
317 **MT:** Bruno Fernandes. Greenwood. Alexander-Arnold gets back and he's
318 done some duty on the left hand side. After the corner. Gets back in
319 the right place and he hooks it forward here. Lindelöf underneath
320 it. Drops for Firmino. Couldn't quite slide it through to Salah who

321 just skips in the air in frustration. Scored in the last nine games
322 of course, for his club and he might be in here. Absolute gift is it
323 to Mo Salah. Well, Jota was in the middle. Firmino, it was a mistake
324 from the far side by Marcus Rashford I think.
325 **GN:** It was.
326 **MT:** () a free kick which he is not going to get.
327 **GN:** Manchester United, they just got moments of madness in them. You
328 talked about them winning the games in moments, but they're losing
329 the games in moments at the moment. I have to say it's really crazy
330 things happening out there. Marcus Rashford slots it thirty
331 yards down the line for a one-on-one for Salah.
332 **MT:** Here's Jota, almost connecting then. Would have been a difficult
333 finish, but not impossible one. Yeah, madness or magic you don't
334 know, do you...
335 **GN:** No
336 **MT:** … when you come here?
337 **GN:** Gotta praise the team. Look at that. Marcus Rashford tries to
338 fire it back. I think it's to Luke Shaw, it's nowhere near him. And
339 the only thing that saves David De Gea really is that Salah's got
340 such a tight angle.
341 **MT:** Offside. And the other thing to say there with David De Gea,
342 knew there was going to be a shot.
343 **JC:** Yeah, it was a tight angle. He still made himself big, made
344 himself difficult. Talking about Manchester United's problems this
345 season, the fact that he's been the best player. That sums that up.
346 **MT:** () by Alisson to Firmino. Intercepted by Ronaldo. McTominay,
347 breaks for Ronaldo, not so sure footed, Liverpool, as they were at
348 the start. Towards the latter stages of the first half. Just nicked
349 away and that was good tracking back by Jota. By Robertson, rather,
350 Robertson got the touch.
351 **GN:** Liverpool will be delighted with how these first 33 minutes have
352 gone, but they'll still be weary, those players on the pitch and
353 their coach, and their fans. Manchester United still look dangerous.
354 It's a brilliant header from Robertson.
355 **MT:** Shaw to take the corner. Still more than ten minutes to go to
356 halftime. Kept it alive Manchester United here and thought it was
357 going to drop to Rashford. It's still alive with Shaw. It's been
358 through, pretty much everything. It's a corner, it's a goal kick.
359 **GN:** There's no communication on the back-post between, I think it's
360 Rashford and Greenwood. It looks like it's perfect. For Rashford to
361 hit, he may be offside anyway, maybe that Greenwood has to take it.
362 **MT:** The only consolation from Ole Gunnar Solskjær was that the two
363 goals Liverpool have scored have come very early. And then, a time
364 for a comeback, you could call them comeback kings, really, down the
365 years. There's plenty of it, and they're coming close. Still united
366 nil. Liverpool two. McTominay. Fernandes, and it's just behind
367 Ronaldo.... And that's a lovely first-time pass and it was there to

368 be hit, he might had time for a touch. But he probably looking at
369 the dropping ball, couldn't have known that.
370 **GN:** Maybe, like you say, could have taken a touch. It was an awkward
371 one for him to hit on the half volley.
372 **MT:** Five goals against Liverpool, all of them at Old Trafford, for
373 Marcus Rashford. Salah. Keita has popped up in wider position, since
374 Milner's gone off. Curtis Jones, very much in the middle. Henderson.
375 Konaté. Salah, and Jones. Plenty of local lads now for Liverpool
376 with Curtis Jones and Trent Alexander-Arnold. Plenty of the
377 Mancunian in the Manchester United ranks, Marcus Rashford. Not at
378 the moment. None of us, lurking left but Liverpool perhaps could
379 enjoy a bit more possession, Konaté trying to slide it through,
380 Salah had made the run from outside to in. Firmino. Henderson.
381 Firmino. Salah. Cooking it up Liverpool here. Jota. Salah. Great
382 from Naby Keita, Salah. He keeps on going, Liverpool keep on scoring
383 and Mo Salah is the man again. He scores for a tenth appearance in a
384 row, ten out of ten for the Egyptian king.
385 **GN:** Well, Manchester United are kidding themselves that they're
386 pressing team today that they can actually coordinate it as one,
387 they can't. They're all over the place, and every time they try and
388 press, Liverpool pull them apart and it's just composure. A little
389 bit of good fortune at the end in terms of that deflection, but the
390 quality then returns as Keita knocks it across to Salah. But look at
391 Manchester United. All over the place. This is now a really
392 disturbing first half, that takes the game away from Manchester
393 United.
394 **MT:** Well, the landmarks keep on coming for this fella. A hundred and
395 five goals now. The top African above Didier Drogba, first Liverpool
396 player ever, as you saw, to score in three consecutive visits to Old
397 Trafford. And he's made it three-nil here at a time when Manchester
398 United were just flexing more muscle, but not strong enough it
399 seems.
400 **GN:** Now this is the fair. This is Manchester United's performance
401 levels have been like all season, but they are playing against a
402 proper team who can harm them today and harm them they are. Well,
403 did Liverpool or even at the best, but they're clinical and they're
404 precise in what they do, and they're organised in defence. And
405 Manchester United, this Manchester United, so far this season,
406 haven't got the answers for that.
407 **MT:** Lindelöf. Wan-Bissaka. Cut off by Henderson, who's recognised
408 the need to get at United again. A little too clever with the pass …
409 for Bruno Fernandes. And off goes Cristiano Ronaldo and up comes the
410 flag. Gary, I know you're of the opinion that within the club and
411 you know it very well, better than the rest of us, that there's no
412 wish to dispense with the services of Ole Gunnar Solskjær, but a
413 really big home defeat here, does that change things?
414 **GN:** Well, it will change after today, but it brings massive
415 pressure, Martin. I mean, I have to say, Manchester United's run of

fixtures this season have been as simple as they could have, could
have possibly come. This is the first what would be super team that
they're playing against and they're getting pulled apart like you
wouldn't believe.

JC: I agree with what you said before, Gary. Even though that
results, certainly the score half, maybe going into half-time,
Liverpool can still actually play better. So often, they've given
Manchester United an opportunity by losing the ball, allowing a
counterattack off their goal have come from a number of passes and
not making a silly decision. You see the devastating effect when you
can make passes.

MT: It wasn't always a fortress here under Alex Ferguson, but it was
mostly. He lost and the eight percent of his Premier League home
games. There are a lot of them. More than double that now in the
eight years or so since a great man retired. Looking down the barrel
of another one here.

GN: So the worrying thing is, Jamie just said, that he watches a lot
more of Liverpool than I do. This is Liverpool at seventy-five
eighty percent. They could have played a lot more on the ball, they
have given Manchester United a few chances. And yeah, still good
enough to go in three-nil at half time. Dominant.

MT: You think that was a four-one here, Fabio Aurelio and Dossena
scored. Three-nil and Luis Suarez was in very good form. Of course,
four-two last season. From Rashford … Greenwood knew that he was
offside and didn't run the afterburners. Gary Beswick holds the
flag. Need to make the team again after the two early goals, but a
half-time cup of tea wont taste very powerful at all. Mo Salah has
scored what is now his customary goal. Best player in the world at
the moment. It's being said all the time and there's nothing we've
seen here to change that. He is magical. By Alexander-Arnold, out by
Maguire. Greenwood. Only gets as far as Robertson. Henderson, I
think, mindful of the time, slowing it down. Want to give anything
like a leg up to Manchester United before the half time whistle.
Konaté. McTominay. Free kick to Manchester United and I think Naby
Keita tried to block it, but the free kick was taken accurately.
Maguire. Rashford. Now Fred. Shaw, who has been booked. Cleared by
Konaté. Out by Fred. Rashford... Alexander-Arnold and he's got past
him. And there's only Ronaldo in there, and in the red shirt anyway.
Really would have been a chance just to ruffle those Liverpool
feathers as it is. It's time for another Merseyside counterattack.
Jota. Oh, Robertson. It has gone all the way across and Keita
couldn't get there. Still three added minutes. United three goals
down. Ronaldo. Alisson, kept his shape. And...

GN: His head's gone.

MT: And the referee could make another headline here as Cristiano
Ronaldo, who is never a good loser he. He doesn't lose very often.
The VAR check on this, he is kicking out the ball. Maybe that will
get him off the hook.

464 **GN:** I think he does kick out the ball, but there's no doubt he knows
465 that the frustration of this first half.
466 **MT:** And he's booked for it.
467 **GN:** Well, you can see there he just get the ball, it just boots it
468 straight into him, I think the actual free kick had already been
469 given.
470 **MT:** Stuart Atwell is looking at it for VAR. Liverpool feel the
471 punishment is a lenient one. The skirmish I think following the
472 episode is just being checked as well. There's a little bit of push
473 and shove, but nothing over violent. By Fred. It is the way the game
474 now, if you endanger the safety of an opponent. Luke Shaw gave away
475 a penalty with England for something similar, against Hungary at
476 Wembley recently. They're full of contrition and apology.
477 **GN:** It does look like Manchester United, the group of players
478 there...
479 **MT:** Shell shocked?
480 **GN:** Yeah. Dejected. Look at the body language, those five that you
481 can see in picture. They just need to get in at half time and
482 somehow regroup. He's got to think of what he's going to say to
483 them. That first half hasn't worked in a collection of individual
484 errors, mistakes tactically in terms of the organisation and
485 pressing. Not sure what Greenwood and Wan-Bissaka have done on that
486 first goal, but it's not the first time we've seen, it's a pattern,
487 and it happened at Leicester last week. It's something that hasn't
488 been corrected from a previous game.
489 **JC:** Not quite sure if there is pressing from the front, is it, or
490 dropping back on the counterattack. It seems a little bit in between
491 off the cuff at times. ... half time.
492 **GN:** Think of the changes. There's no doubt about that. I always
493 thought of the risk of starting with McTominay and Fred that you end
494 up losing with them to the team, where do you go from there? I never
495 thought it was a Pogba problem in midfield or a McTominay and Fred
496 issue or even a Ronaldo upfront issue. I think there's a mentality,
497 that I said before, training every single day. You don't concede
498 goals. That's the mentality that exists in every second in training.
499 It doesn't come on to the pitch on a Saturday by magic.
500 **MT:** Jota. Salah. Wow. It is absolute mayhem for Manchester United
501 and Liverpool are cashing in on every chance. Mo Salah gets his
502 second, Liverpool get the fourth. Solskjær shake of the head. He
503 needs to shake up his team. It's almost as if Salah couldn't believe
504 how easy it was.
505 **GN:** Oh dear, well just get pulled across again. It's very similar
506 remnant of the first goal where they just get swept across the
507 pitch. Liverpool have done their homework. Play a few passes across
508 the pitch. A little bit of a turn from Firmino. Couldn't help pass
509 from Robertson and then he just got that overload on that far side,
510 Salah, as I said, the minute they play a proper team, this is what's

511 gonna happen. Half decent teams are conceding and scoring goals
512 against them. Proper teams will batter them.
513 **MT:** Salah continues to accept everything that comes his way, and
514 there's been plenty and listen to the noise from the majority inside
515 Old Trafford. Directed at the manager and to the players who have
516 not grafted the occasion. One of the games of the season where
517 motivation shouldn't be needed and they've been a shambles.
518 Manchester United and Liverpool without being at their very very
519 best. Absolutely cash in on it. Two for Salah after Keita. And Jota.
520 At set Liverpool on their way with too early now, too late, it's all
521 too late for Manchester United. Look at that score line in the great
522 history of this fixture.
523 **MT:** Mason Greenwood is off. And here's Luke Shaw.
524 **GN:** United have gone to a diamond, Rashford and Ronaldo up front.
525 Fernandes in behind and then three in midfield; Fred McTominay and
526 Pogba.
527 **MT:** Jones being chased and caught untidy by Bruno Fernandes.
528 **GN:** That's not a good tackle by Bruno Fernandes.
529 **MT:** That's a yellow card tackle.
530 **GN:** His foot's planted and gets into a bit of trouble.
531 **MT:** Mo Salah lurking, is on a hat trick, of course. From Alexander
532 Arnold, and first contact was from Liverpool, not any danger to
533 United that time, but again, it's a little sign of weakness.
534 **JC:** I mean the set up now for Manchester United, Gary, I listened
535 that you mentioned, maybe getting, you mentioned Cavani, at
536 different times playing with Ronaldo. Is that a setup that they can
537 maybe use you think going forward?
538 **GN:** At this moment in time, not quite sure whether this is the
539 system or not, they're reacting obviously, to an absolutely
540 devastatingly shocking first-half where they've come four nil down.
541 So whether this is a longer term plan I'm not sure, but in the short
542 term it's just got to try and salvage some sort of decency in this
543 second-half, because that first half is nowhere near good enough,
544 it's been coming. Five-six weeks, Manchester United haven't played
545 anybody yet with regards to sort of City, Chelsea, Liverpool as soon
546 as they've come up against a team, a really good team, they had been
547 torn to shreds and it's told them exactly where they're at.
548 **MT:** Next home game is the Manchester Derby. Four weeks time. Keita.
549 Alexander-Arnold.
550 **JC:** Spaces for Liverpool now, the two full backs. Not like playing
551 for Manchester United. Really tight midfield.
552 **GN:** Luke Shaw who said to his team at half time be professional, do
553 the right things. Don't lose your discipline, don't get involved in
554 any spats that may occur. Be sensible.
555 **MT:** If they get everything, Manchester United, make them earn it. He
556 would probably be saying, you know, mistakes that might just
557 encourage the team that's had so many comebacks. From a position
558 like this, probably think recently six-one Spurs won here didn't

559 they? And then Martial was sent off by Anthony Taylor, today's
560 referee, who was a six-one against Manchester City. Again, they,
561 Johnny Evans went off in that game, so. We've got full compliment on
562 the pitch at the moment. Maguire, the shadow of the dominating
563 defender he can be. Not quite right on his game though. McTominay.
564 Fred. Pogba tackled. Henderson, what a pass that is for Mo Salah, is
565 this going to be the hat trick? It certainly is. It's five inside
566 five minutes of the second half. Only Dirk Kuyt has got a Liverpool
567 hat trick in the Premier League against Manchester United and now
568 you can add Mo Salah for that very short list. Whatever he does, he
569 tops it the next week.
570 **GN:** I thought it couldn't get any worse. Stuck under Pogba's feet
571 couldn't at the middle of midfield, it's dispossessed, with the
572 Liverpool players all over, and then what a pass by Jordan
573 Henderson, and once it comes to Salah, well, forget about it. It's a
574 goal. He's absolutely brilliant. The composure at speed is
575 incredible, and you thought it couldn't get any worse for Manchester
576 United, but it is going to if that man gets chances because he's
577 outstanding and Liverpool rampant here.
578 **MT:** And we wonder what the second-half approach might be, maybe a
579 little bit more considered, more cautious. Certainly not. Firmino,
580 they want more, Liverpool. Rashford, offside. We talk about the
581 rivalry here, the friction, a feud if you like, not quite
582 neighbours, but far too close for comfort, they're nowhere near
583 close on the scoreline and the home fans, at least a number of them,
584 taking an early exit and the man who's inspired so much success
585 here, puffing out his cheeks in total disbelief. There's a legend in
586 the Liverpool ranks, absolutely revelling in every moment of it.
587 Pogba the lets it run. Robertson has to accelerate and doesn't take
588 any risks. You have to see it to believe it. If you have been with
589 us from the start, you'd know exactly how it's happened.
590 **JC:** No Liverpool team has ever been in a position like this at Old
591 Trafford.
592 **MT:** Ronaldo, trying to drift in behind, focusing, and he scores in
593 Ronaldo fashion. They're not going to put him in the shame, whatever
594 the final score line.
595 **GN:** I think he's just onside, I think it's Andy Robertson over that
596 far side, who's just a little deeper than the other back three, once
597 he gets into this position, that where they would have wanted him
598 today against Trent Alexander-Arnold and that right centre-back,
599 that's Konaté. A little bit like Salah. Once he gets into that
600 position, he shifts out with his feet, it's a good chance he's gonna
601 score, the power in the finish. Well...
602 **MT:** It is being checked.
603 **GN:** It is Robertson over on that far side and they're looking at it,
604 he may just be off. I'm not sure. That red line, oh he is off.
605 **MT:** Nothing going away of Manchester United, it was a wonderful
606 finish, a reminder that we're looking on a losing team and one of

607 the very best footballers the world has ever seen, and he's being,
608 outskilled, outscored by the current best player in the world who's
609 grabbed another hat trick today. The marvellous Mo Salah.
610 **GN:** I think the rest of Liverpool fans at the end of the game, what
611 was the best moment of the match and they would probably say that.
612 **MT:** Ha ha. Love to cheer.
613 **JC:** It's never been so good. They're away at Old Trafford, saver it,
614 it will never happen again.
615 **MT:** Going into politics, they've never had it so good. We've heard
616 that before? Here's Konaté. Curtis Jones. Here come Liverpool again
617 with the crisp interpassing. Jones through the middle and now,
618 Maguire. It's going to be checked again, Anthony Taylor stopped it
619 now. Maguire was sure he got the ball from Anthony Taylor's point of
620 view, he would have seen it the opposite side to us. Didn't look too
621 clever from up here.
622 **GN:** No, he took his time, Anthony Taylor, looked a foul, looked like
623 a kick through the back of Jota but it's outside the box. Anthony
624 Taylor took an age to review it, I think he saw that Jota wasn't
625 having him over at all and just see there, he just takes away Jota's
626 leg. Definite foul.
627 **MT:** And another cameo of the current troubles of Harry Maguire
628 trying to get fitness back, trying to get freshness back after the
629 efforts for England. May be the same applies to Luke Shaw as well.
630 Checking whether this is a denial of a goal scoring opportunity. In
631 which case, would be a red card.
632 **JC:** He was through the centre of the goal...
633 **MT:** Yeah
634 **JC:** and Wan-Bissaka was just coming through.
635 **MT:** () of a goal-scoring opportunity. Must have been a tight call
636 for VAR, but not enough to overturn Anthony Taylor's original
637 decision. They're all lined up, Salah. Alexander-Arnold. Henderson.
638 And it's Salah. Hits the wall. And Liverpool's still on the front
639 foot with the corner. Virgil van Dijk, I think he might better help
640 himself. Defending, pushing parcel, Fred. Bruno Fernandes. Alisson
641 moves into midfield with a deft touch. United lose it again. Losing
642 the match and losing, you feel, a lot of self-respect as well.
643 They've been brushed aside. A really feeble performance, Edinson
644 Cavani summoned. Maguire. Diogo Dalot is off so, coming on and () on
645 the right back for Wan-Bissaka, who was away in Italy on loan last
646 season. Fred. Shaw. Now Rashford. Fred. Pogba. Flicks it around the
647 corner to Bruno Fernandes and ()took out Konaté with the cross. Wise
648 today, Robertson. Fernandes, more tenacity, wins a corner.
649 **GN:** Ooo...
650 **MT:** That's a good challenge by Pogba.
651 **GN:** They'd be delighted to see the yellow.
652 **MT:** Again, it will be looked at. That was a second foot coming in.
653 **GN:** Looked like he jumped, from where we were, () tackles get
654 punished badly and I think that's a real, that's a real problem for

655 Paul Pogba, I think that's over the top. It looked awful at the time
656 from quite a long way away, but as you watch it again that replay
657 he'll be nervous, Paul Pogba. I think it's a red.
658 **MT:** Anthony Taylor is going to have a look at the monitor and this
659 is potentially bad news for Paul Pogba, more indignity for
660 Manchester United. Looking at it first in real time.
661 **GN:** I don't think he's got a leg to stand on, Paul Pogba, but I
662 think we all recognise that's the type of tackle that needs to go.
663 **MT:** It's lucky that Keita's has got a leg to stand on and the yellow
664 is changed to red, he'd been on fifteen minutes, the fifth goal was
665 bad enough, Ole Gunnar Solskjær, and now his team is depleted. It's
666 organised, dejected.
667 **GN:** There were signs of ill-discipline before half time for the
668 Manchester United group and that's gone into the second-half,
669 ()tackled down here by Fernandes that wasn't great, Pogba was
670 followed it up with a straight red...
671 **MT:** The Ronaldo one just before half time.
672 **GN:** Yeah yeah, there's, all three of them, tall challenges.
673 **JC:** He's worried now, for the manager, bringing two players on,
674 Manchester United, two subs, () five-nil now, Ole Gunnar Solskjær
675 and Manchester United.
676 **MT:** It's a day of shame here at Old Trafford for the home team.
677 **GN:** Martin, this is as bad as it gets. Honestly, I, look, at the end
678 of the day, we've all lost football matches in a in a bad way. Sir
679 Alex Ferguson once lost a game six-one against Manchester City. I
680 lost the game away at Newcastle, I think five-nil. It happens, but
681 it's the nature of the performance and it capitulated.
682 **JC:** Liverpool would rather Manchester United, had eleven men. Keita
683 is not in distress, Liverpool have got big problems in midfield,
684 Milner's not in this game.
685 **MT:** Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain is the next midfield cab off the rank
686 here. Milner off early. Ten years ago yesterday, the claim that
687 you're referring to, the six-one against Manchester City, more
688 recently, the six-one here against Spurs, this is Liverpool. This is
689 the great rivalry. Whatever the circumstances you expect it to be
690 ultra competitive, not just to complete one horse race. So it's a
691 lot of pleasure here, but not without some pain for Liverpool.
692 **GN:** Look, that's the type of tackle all professional football
693 player, ex-professional football player, wants to see. You're always
694 going to damage, potentially, damage your opponent if you jump in
695 like that and lunges up the ball. Soon as we saw it, we both went
696 oh...
697 **JC:** ...I mean.
698 **GN:** Bad one.
699 **JC:** … there's obviously talk this season, the referees, you know,
700 been a bit more lenient but no one wants challenges like that, and
701 rightly so with VAR, you're not gonna get away with challenges like

702 that. Should be a red card, you see that change now from Liverpool
703 just fingers crossed it's not too bad.
704 **GN**: Manchester United's gone to five at the back, Dalot's left wing
705 back, Wan-Bissaka right wing-back, I think that that's what they
706 would have done, actually, if they are eleven men, but it's now the
707 same way, two in front, McTominay and Fred, and two up top.
708 **JC**: Liverpool can't have any sympathy for Manchester United about
709 the score line and the way it is, they'll never get opportunity like
710 this again, to really have a big score line that will never be
711 forgotten, this one may not be, they are really going to go for it.
712 Manchester United, I'm sure, they would've done the same.
713 **MT**: Alexander-Arnold. Salah. Oxlade-Chamberlain, I'm sorry, Firmino.
714 Here's Oxlade-Chamberlain. Going with him. Certainly doesn't damage
715 the goal power in midfield Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, often when to
716 chip in when he gets the chance, hasn't had so many chances, some of
717 that through injury, some of that through selection, still a very
718 capable player. His pass, Salah chases () going for Mo Salah. Almost
719 thought that was going to drop in over De Gea. Almost in the
720 situation of being more outside than inside.
721 **GN**: Can I go?
722 **MT**: He he, no.
723 **JC**: Can I go in there?
724 **MT**: Ha ha ha. Difficult to punch the air when you're holding the
725 microphone () isn't it?
726 **JC**: () fourth goal with him.
727 **MT**: He he he. Here's Wan-Bissaka. Here's Fred. Dalot. () Alexander-
728 Arnold and eh, Oxlade-Chamberlain loses out. Fred. Ronaldo, has done
729 well to get across him, but of course, they're one man short now.
730 Shaw. Still more than half of the second-half to go.
731 **GN**: If you'd ask me about ten minutes ago whether you thought
732 Manchester United, Ole Gunnar Solskjær, would maybe go towards a
733 diamond, I think there's more chance than going five at the back,
734 one clean sheet in twenty-one games that one at Wolves went to be
735 fair, Wolves should have scored three or four. It's nowhere near
736 good, it's a massive, massive problem, and it's caused Ole Gunnar
737 Solskjær massive pressure.
738 **JC**: It's impossible, as the attacking players that you talk
739 about who need to play because they're big names, they're world
740 class talent when you go to that system.
741 **GN**: You got two top straight away, Cavani and Ronaldo, three
742 in midfield. Take your pick. I'm not that bothered at the moment to
743 be fair.
744 **MT**: It won't be Pogba for a while, they're getting a three-game ban
745 for that.
746 **JC**: I mean, there's a Liverpool result here, a few years ago, I
747 think Liverpool won three-nil and David Moyes was the manager, () a
748 turning point, I think this could be for the manager.

749 **GN:** The pressure after this game, as you know, is going to be
750 absolutely intolerable in certain quarters of the board. It made
751 everyone aware that the last few weeks, and the briefings that are
752 absolutely steadfast in the support of the manager and that he
753 stays, they're going to go through these difficult moments and let
754 him build this new-new team. Results like this undermine that there
755 is absolutely no doubt because losing five-nil at home against
756 Liverpool with twenty-five minutes to go is sobering.
757 **JC:** When you talk about giving time for a new team, but we are
758 talking about a thirty-six year-old Ronaldo, Champions League winner
759 multiple times and World Cup winner in Varane, seventy-
760 eighty million pound player in Sancho, that's right now, isn't it?
761 **GN:** Just mean letting these three settle in, there's obviously nine
762 games into the season, they've been a bad nine games, a terrible
763 nine games. Forget this one, the other eight performances have been
764 poor. All the teams that played against them could have scored
765 multiple goals, even Newcastle on the Ronaldo introduction day could
766 have scored lots of goals, they had lots of chances, it's been
767 coming this sobering moment, it's gonna change, got to change and
768 Ole Gunnar Solskjær isn't gonna to get that chance to change it I
769 believe.
770 **JC:** ()
771 **GN:** Well, change the mentality, change the system, change the
772 players. He's got twenty-five of them, but there is going to be
773 untold pressure from every single source.
774 **MT:** Extension, of United's record of having had more red cards
775 against Liverpool than against any other team, that's tenth in the
776 Premier League era, four of them to Nemanja Vidic, you must have
777 played in some of those. Jadon Sancho, who arrived with a real
778 fanfare and his opportunities undoubtedly have been restricted by
779 the fact that after he arrived then right at the end of the transfer
780 window, Cristiano Ronaldo was last to return to Old Trafford.
781 **GN:** He must be thinking what the hell?
782 **MT:** Yeah, he must.
783 **GN:** You've chased me for two years, brought me in, forget-forget,
784 what about van de Beek? () mention him anymore, forty-odd million
785 quid sat on the bench not kicked a football.
786 **MT:** Henderson.
787 **GN:** Liverpool coming here today without Fabinho, without Mané,
788 without Matip. Manchester United at full strength apart from Varane.
789 There's no excuse.
790 **JC:** You'd fancy them before the game, didn't you?
791 **GN:** I did, I-I, now it's looking like it was complete emotion and
792 heart. You could never have imagined Manchester United with this
793 bad. At two-nil, I think you were thinking United will score and get
794 back in the game. We've just lost everything here today, discipline,
795 organization. What could go wrong, has gone wrong.

796 **MT:** Curtis Jones. Oxlade-Chamblerlain. It's total defence for and
797 running up field, Manchester United players, can't say damage
798 limitation because the damage is already done. Here's Alexander-
799 Arnold trying to create some more and buffered by David De Gea,
800 which was a top top save. It would have been six.
801 **GN:** Still twenty-odd minutes to go, he just takes it inside that on
802 the exit brilliantly Alexander-Arnold, just close enough to David De
803 Gea, still needs a strong hand on it.
804 **MT:** Henderson. Easing it in, Maguire does get head to it, and
805 dropped to Salah. Surely, there's never been a game, certainly in
806 recent memory where one of these two rivals has just tip, tapping
807 around and gaining the bag, goals in the opposition net plenty, the
808 gap is wider than the thirty-odd miles between the two grounds.
809 Jones. Van dijk, () a piece of it and then realising a clean sheet
810 would be quite nicely coming away with, and just have that marginal
811 call, that scare from Cristiano Ronaldo's harrowing shot. Didn't
812 count because of offside. Alexander-Arnold, Jones, Jota. Cavani gets
813 the foot in, was the furthest forward, not where he was, but () it
814 was a perceptive pass. Dalot, sorted out by Konaté.
815 **GN:** Showed the United fans leaving before, Martin, Manchester United
816 players were looking think there's not enough leaving because
817 there's still sixty-odd thousand left in the ground, watching
818 intently, it's not been received well at all, this is how half-time
819 was received, this second-half, is equally as bad. I think the worse
820 by the Paul Pogba red card.
821 **MT:** Jota, tuck it in field to Salah. Fred. Ran back by Henderson and
822 Jones, and Salah will get there, he's got a bit to do to go in on
823 goal from here. He looks for Bobby Firmino.
824 **GN:** Angry, angry with himself or maybe with Jota just for over
825 hitting the pass because he was through on goal, Mo Salah. Not
826 exactly with Jota.
827 **MT:** He's also scored for the first five league away games for
828 Liverpool this season, hasn't been done since nineteen-hundred and
829 two.
830 **JC:** Scoreline at this battle, the big team, certainly at home,
831 Manchester United are the story, there's no doubt this is a huge
832 result, just the scoreline, but actually come here and win, for
833 Liverpool, still, there's a lot of people up and down this country
834 that don't really fancy Liverpool to win the league, this season,
835 they've played two of the rivals at home and have got the three
836 points so there's two really big games for Liverpool to get three
837 points on the way here today, really cements them outside Chelsea,
838 Manchester City, the three teams going to really contest this
839 title.
840 **MT:** Just remind you, Liverpool, was seven points ahead of Manchester
841 United, and will be eight points off the top with nine games gone.
842 **GN:** Not an easy run of games, in the first nine. Liverpool have
843 played United away, City, they've played Chelsea, Chelsea have

844 played Arsenal, Tottenham, City and Liverpool. City have played
845 Liverpool, Chelsea, Tottenham. It's Manchester United's first real
846 top four-game, top six game.
847 **MT**: Already, they've lost here to Villa, haven't they? Only draw
848 with Everton? They went out of the Carabao Cup to West Ham on this
849 ground. Alexander-Arnold, it was going out. Still fully focused.
850 There's Sadio Mané, fifteen minutes to get a goal, he'd thinking.
851 For Roberto Firmino, so often the case has been the heart of so many
852 moves. Jurgen Klopp incidentally, is one in short, well, Liverpool
853 are one short of two-hundred wins, while Jürgen Klopp has been
854 managing, hasn't been at all the games, if you recall. And his
855 management, the stats will say, I think two-hundredths in the bag,
856 and he will be the first ever Liverpool manager to go seven league
857 games unbeaten against Manchester United. Minus stats, the big stat
858 is the scoreline, it's going to resonate around the world where this
859 game has been to, almost all the countries, this is the one that
860 they regard as the most watched football match in club football, and
861 it's hardly been a contest. The moment Naby Keita got in to expose
862 Manchester United's fragilities, could only be one winner.
863 **JC**: I think what we're seeing in the full glare of the world,
864 Martin, is a team be individuals, and that's been the huge
865 difference, it really is. The individuals from Manchester United and
866 they're not bad players, this Liverpool team is a team everyone
867 felt, certainly a lot of people, () Liverpool came into this game,
868 we all saw the team sheet. There's a lot more people that fancy
869 Manchester United in the back of that, now was a big midweek in the
870 crowd, standing well against Liverpool. Just shows how much this
871 team is achieved, that players can come out, other players come in.
872 There's absolutely no difference.
873 **MT**: It's just the two injuries that really have spurred the day
874 really making it perfect. James Miner, it looked like a calf strain
875 and will take a week or two, and we'll wait a bulletin on Naby
876 Keita, who had to leave on the stretcher. Put there by Paul Pogba.
877 Mané, more incentive than most just to cooking it up for Liverpool
878 and maybe lure a chance out of what we've got at five, that are very
879 much a five. Salah.
880 **GN**: This is probably the best that Manchester United can hope for.
881 For Liverpool to just run the clock down like this, don't score
882 anymore.
883 **MT**: Jota, tried to roll past Lindelöf. Haven't had too much
884 protection, won't think of any of the goals being down to him. Foul
885 by Cavani.
886 **JC**: () on that pitch, the () of age of players in front of me, to
887 play forward, make runs forward, you know, you could not get this
888 opportunity again and really put Manchester United to the sword, ()
889 already?
890 **MT**: Grim watching for those who were on the field, and certainly now
891 they have to endure, those who are out there were, all

892 embarrassment, humiliated. Liverpool want to flick the switch, you
893 feel they could do it again.
894 **GN:** Just fear what this defeat will do to that Manchester United
895 group of players.
896 **MT:** Salah.
897 **GN:** In terms of confidence, how they pick themselves up, there's no
898 doubt the manager's going to get an absolute battering, and there's
899 gonna be calls for his head like you would not believe in this next
900 twenty-four hours.
901 **MT:** The players who supported him from within and we certainly
902 believe that's been very strong. Here's Mané. () to get one for
903 himself, but it is, Curtis Jones was very angry, he's had to roll it
904 to his left, Jones has got it now. Thinking twice about giving it to
905 Mané, gives is it to Robertson in the end, Salah going in, a
906 little hesitation there, De Gea comes out.
907 **GN:** So much happening today from a Manchester United point of view
908 in terms of how bad it's been, but the thing that stands out in my
909 mind is their organisation around the press in the early parts of
910 the game with Wan-Bissaka and Greenwood on this side, Rashford on
911 the other side. Pressing endlessly, without a real trigger, not
912 getting there half-hearted.
913 **MT:** Jota has a go.
914 **GN:** Liverpool just pulling them apart, there's so many other things,
915 bad individual performances.
916 **JC:** Just to point the finger, individual players will be talking to
917 the staff, what is happening on the train pitch, we identified...
918 **GN:** He's got, no...
919 **JC:** … this on Monday night, right?
920 **GN:** He, there's no doubt he and his coaching team have got to take
921 the blame for the way in which the team press. There's no doubt
922 about that. You know, we-we pointed out on Monday night after
923 Leicester, we saw Greenwood going to, ehm I think it was Söyüncü in
924 that left channel, we saw him getting played around out to the stand
925 near the left wing back. It is a mirror today, so whatever happened
926 at Leicester has been repeated today on the pitch, and that
927 obviously has to come down to the coaching staff. I can't believe
928 the tactics of pressing on to van Dijk, Greenwood, for Wan-Bissaka
929 to jump against Jota and go to Robertson. Why would you do that
930 against this team? They're not capable, they haven't got it in them
931 to do it. They're not a pressing team, they have Rashford,
932 Greenwood, Ronaldo, you're not going to press those three. You're
933 not gonna win the ball back with those three. You have to sit back
934 and play on the counter-attack. If you're gonna press, put Jesse
935 Lingard in, put the other ones in that can run all day.
936 **MT:** The ten men of Manchester United have got a free kick, and a
937 free header for McTominay, off the bar from Cavani, was it? Who was
938 going in, Ronaldo as well. What a chance.

GN: Yeah, Maguire, I think, just gets caught in a tangle at the back there, it allows McTominay to be free, he does well to place it across the goal with his head.

MT: Cavani hit the bar. The other thing that we didn't say at the top really was that, they're saying, named the same eleven pretty gleefully, really, and that eleven were two-nil down.

GN: I was surprised that the same eleven, I said to you before the game I, I was surprised that two, that team went two-nil down against Atalanta and should have been out of sight. Atalanta, Martin, you made me aware, I wasn't there at the game...

MT: Had five players out...

GN: ...five players missing.

MT: ...and at half-time when they were two-nil up, their best player on the night Demiral, the centre-back went off with a torn hamstring, but they had six out

GN: Yeah.

MT: ...when they comeback was on.

GN: So they, Atalanta go two-nil up, they have six players out against Manchester United, Manchester United in the end, winning the last second with the header from Ronaldo, to me, that wasn't saying, that wasn't go again, go again, boys, that was, I did say last week. I thought the team that played against Leicester probably shouldn't been given a chance, I think you signed Sancho for seventy-odd million, you've got a ninety-odd million dollar signing in Pogba.

JC: Is it a case whatever you tried that moment in Manchester United, the organization is not there so whatever you're trying, you play Pogba in midfield against Leicester, he does something different midweek, to do something different here again, it's still the same result.

GN: Jamie, Ole Gunnar Solskjær for three years has played on the counterattack, he's played deep and he's counterattack. I have no idea why they've not done that here today, they got pulled apart at second-half against Leicester who were trying somehow to press on to let the Leicester back three, they're trying to press on to van Dijk and Konaté. Why? Why do you try and, Liverpool compress, City compress, this Manchester United team are incapable of pressing even if you organize them, they haven't got it, Ronaldo can't press, Greenwood is not going to press, Rashford is not going to press, they're not Firmino, Mané, they're not that type.

MT: Oxlade-Chamberlain from distance, it is Manchester restricting Liverpool shooting from outside the penalty area. Edinson Cavani was well inside the penalty area, almost on the line.

GN: If you want to press, play him.

MT: It was going in, but it did hit Robinson onto the bar.

GN: He's a striker that does run around.

MT: Cristiano Ronaldo, now that we understand the commercial implications of him coming back here, understand that he's still a fine player, and he's shown that already and the goals that he's got

987 in his early Premier League games and the two winning goals he's got
988 in home Champions League games here, here he is still out there, but
989 if there was a plan without Ronaldo, it was, it was shell, just
990 shredded when he came, that would have involved Cavani playing and
991 Sancho playing. Wan-Bissaka got there as quick as he could but it
992 wasn't quick enough. Liverpool in the Carabao Cup live on Sky Sports
993 on Wednesday at seven, will be a slightly different team, but they,
994 and we'll see how Manchester United respond at Spurs Saturday Night
995 Football next Saturday.
996 **GN:** What what this does, plus nine games of the season is put the
997 top three teams who performed well at the top of the league, all
998 within a couple of points of one another. City, Chelsea and
999 Liverpool, they're outstanding teams.
1000 **MT:** And we mustn't, in looking at United's shortcomings to get how
1001 well Liverpool have played here today, as Jamie said it in the
1002 first-half, maybe not as well as he'd hoped, but it's hopefully good
1003 enough to put four first-half goals in and added the one in the
1004 second-half, they've been superb and eh, managing the situation from
1005 what they created with their firepower in the first-half, if not
1006 with the total flow of their football but they have shown themselves
1007 a class apart to the great rivals in this famous fixture.
1008 **JC:** You're right, Martin, they, not just today, they are a class a
1009 part, this is a special Liverpool team and a special manager. It
1010 really is. And those three teams you mentioned, Gary, going for the
1011 Premier League title, right now alongside Bayern Munich, they're the
1012 four best teams in Europe. We have got real quality in the Premier
1013 League.
1014 **MT:** Salah, given away by Alexander-Arnold, and here's Ronaldo
1015 recognising an opportunity, still wanting to add to his extreme goal
1016 tally even in these circumstances, Fred, retrieved by Cavani, the
1017 offside flag was up, the time is almost up, we've loved every minute
1018 of it. Thirteen goals in those ten games in which he scored at least
1019 one in every game.
1020 **GN:** He's just at his peak, absolute peak, this is a player who at
1021 this moment in time can take any game by the scruff of its neck.
1022 **JC:** A very special season, happens in his fourth season, in the
1023 first season, I should say, he almost got fifty goals, there's
1024 another season like that, Liverpool will go very close to the two
1025 big trophies that they be desperate to get their hands on this
1026 season.
1027 **MT:** He says, Jamie, he wants to spend the rest of his career with
1028 Liverpool, he'll never be in a stronger negotiating position to get
1029 the kind of deal that could make that possible.
1030 **JC:** He is an absolute superstar, he really is.
1031 **MT:** () with toying with the opposition, just you know they just want
1032 to get it over and get out of here. As they say in the game, regroup
1033 and go again, there's always another football match to put the
1034 problems behind you.

1035   **JC:** To getting the Man U players that tweet we go again next week?
1036   **GN:** Honestly, I tell you what, the busiest people through this game
1037   will be the Man United player social media teams, they'll all be
1038   coordinating it must be sick. They should come out and just speak
1039   from their hearts.
1040   **MT:** Lindelöf () his frustration.
1041   **JC:** Pogba did that last week, ended on the bench.
1042   **MT:** And Pogba said there's got to be changes after Leicester, than
1043   there was, he was left out.
1044   **GN:** And it was good to hear him speak, no problem with that. he gets
1045   left out for it, there's no problem. There's no doubt...
1046   **MT:** If he got left out for the way, didn't he, lack-lack of
1047   performance at Leicester.
1048   **GN:** At the end of this game, Harry Maguire, Cristiano Ronaldo
1049   they've got to come out and speak, they have to, there's no, there's
1050   no hiding place after this, you have to come out and speak, the
1051   manager obviously as well. The players have to go out there, it's
1052   not going to be easy, probably be hurting badly.
1053   **MT:** Dalot. Cavani. Wan-Bissaka. Another late corner. Torturous,
1054   they've been tortured, the players in red.() did need to Manchester
1055   United, it was a decent start, we go back that Bruno Fernandes
1056   chance at nil-nil, as it came to him that was as good as it got for
1057   Manchester United, he missed and the rest is history. Great history
1058   for Liverpool, Salah ran away and the injury time in the game here
1059   last, remember they got four here last season and now they're
1060   looking to make it six with Curtis Jones, is he gonna get himself an
1061   Old Trafford goal? He was looking for it, Mané turns away in
1062   disappointment, but it been a, a little a bit of self-awareness
1063   earlier involving those two on the other side of the argument, Jones
1064   goes to win it back. Guys, to give you your lap, we've got ninety
1065   seconds to go, a summary from each of you?
1066   **GN:** Look, Liverpool have done everything that you would ask of them
1067   today, they've picked apart and pulled apart with precision, a
1068   Manchester United team that were all over the place but he's a
1069   brilliant, brilliant manager, he's developed a great side with a
1070   great spirit but as soon as you got in front of Manchester United
1071   and it's a big day for Liverpool Football Club, because it was talk
1072   before the game that if they lose here today and the pressure brings
1073   on Liverpool to win the title of the season with Chelsea and City is
1074   big, however, that lot, you know, they're gonna be absolutely
1075   demoralised. They're gonna need some picking up and the next twenty-
1076   four hours are gonna be as hot as it's ever gonna be for them in the
1077   football club, they're gonna have to stand together, it's gonna be
1078   painful.
1079   **MT:** Dalot, then Ronaldo, just got away from him and he makes space
1080   for the shot he was trying to do that, drops his way again, Jamie
1081   Carragher.

1082 **JC:** Well, this Liverpool team are a special team and the supporters
1083 right now in this stadium and watching at home, you are watching the
1084 best of times, and Liverpool really dominated senior, younger set of
1085 fan base, now you are watching world class players, stars and
1086 absolute special manager, but Manchester United are an absolute
1087 mess.
1088 **MT:** Final whistle has been waiting for a long time, there it goes.
1089 Mo Salah has had a magic day, as had Liverpool, a hat trick for the
1090 Egyptian, Liverpool were very very good, Manchester United were
1091 terrible, Ole Gunnar Solskjær will have all the questions to answer
1092 now and maybe some from in the club where there has been something
1093 of a protective shield, but after some up and down results, this is
1094 humiliation. It's totally Liverpool's day at Old Trafford, they're
1095 already seven points clear of Solskjær's United, only nine games
1096 gone. Domestically, their last five games have produced four defeats
1097 and a draw, three of them here to Villa and now Liverpool, plus West
1098 Ham in the Carabao Cup. There is talent at Old Trafford, but not the
1099 team. Liverpool have both. As the score line shows here, one that
1100 will resonate around the world, Manchester United nil, Liverpool
1101 five, Pogba sent off to add to the shame for all those connected at
1102 Old Trafford, the celebrations will go on long for Liverpool.

Appendix 2: Transcription of Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United April 19th, 2022.

Event: Liverpool FC vs. Manchester United April 19th, 2022.

Result: 4-0

Venue: Anfield, Liverpool.

Commentators:

MT: Martin Tyler

GN: Gary Neville

JC: Jamie Carragher

 1 **MT:** And the aims for both teams are equally clear cut. But not to be
 2 taken for granted. Taking a knee pre match. The fight against racism
 3 goes on. It does seem as though four is the magic number this
 4 evening, that's how many trophies Liverpool are chasing and the spot
 5 in the league table, which is suddenly feasible again. Maybe really
 6 surprisingly for Manchester United, the sudden lapse in results,
 7 from three London clubs over the weekend made their three points,
 8 against Norwich, suddenly, out for much more than it would have felt
 9 at the start of the weekend. Is it turning their way, but this is
10 such a difficult set of circumstances in which they've come to
11 Liverpool, they have already beaten them five-nil Old Trafford,
12 remember. Jürgen Klopp would pretty much throw all the aces in his
13 deck of cards, but everywhere you look for the Manchester United
14 point of view seems to be a limbo situation, the club, certain
15 players. But it is this fixture, this very special fixture, here's
16 Alexander-Arnold.
17 **GN:** And we thought Bruno Fernandes might play in that false nine
18 position, he's playing to the right-hand side what looks like a
19 midfield four with Rashford up front. Five-four-one, it looks like,
20 narrow four in midfield, United.
21 **MT:** Such is the rivalry here and both would love to throw the other
22 off course to their specific targets. Sadio Mané these days
23 operating as a central striker. Chance for a counterattack there for
24 Manchester United, they very much set up and trying pick their
25 moments with pace.
26 **GN:** I think this comes about because of trying to chew all Pogba and
27 Fernandes and into this system, you would think that Sancho and
28 Elanga and, would be better in the wide position with Rashford up
29 front, but not up front you want to get those two so-called star
30 players in.
31 **MT:** Robertson. Here's Luis Diaz, and then and then Alexander-Arnold,
32 just over Diaz' head. Matip, who have been stepping forwards in the

33 back to very good effect this season.
34 **JC:** Yeah, you just see the influence of Thiago there that has
35 certainly been caught a lot more in these last couple of months,
36 lovely pass between the lines, didn't look like there was a pass on
37 just one of the best performances for Liverpool after Wembley at the
38 weekend.
39 **MT:** Robertson. Matic, who got the foot in and Pogba, who's trying to
40 get Rashford off and running, parried up by van Dijk. Alisson, we
41 have to learn to expect these kind of hairy moments for goalkeepers.
42 But the risk and the reward and all that, Liverpool capitalised on
43 Wembley, of course, on the risk with no reward for Zack Steffen and
44 Manchester City. (…) David De Gea, couldn't find his range with the
45 clearance, but Alisson, a little bit of a stumble in there. Matic.
46 Fernandes, and looked for a moment as though Diogo Dalot might catch
47 that, but not quite.
48 **GN:** Yeah, I think Dalot has been selected on that left side because
49 of Mo Salah cutting into that left foot, Dalot right footed so he
50 can almost wait for him to come inside, preferred to Telles.
51 **MT:** Yeah, Telles would have been … oh here's Alisson again, raking
52 it away from Fernandes.
53 **GN:** I think Fernandes confronts Alisson again, he's just gonna have
54 to go for him and slide in.
55 **MT:** Mané like. Henderson. Mané. They've got runners over, Manchester
56 United cut apart here. Salah, for Diaz. All too simple for the team
57 that's aiming to be top of the league tonight. Well, he's been some
58 signing, and he just rounded it off, with Manchester United defence
59 was nowhere.
60 **GN:** Well, Manchester United, Harry Maguire half goes into Mané and
61 gets caught on that side and Liverpool have just ripped through that
62 Manchester United back line, absolutely devastating. We always
63 wondered how Manchester United would do, there's obviously a battle
64 going on between Alexander-Arnold and De Gea. Frustration. But
65 hesitation in defence and Liverpool will destroy you. That's just
66 happened.
67 **MT:** Well, it was a passage of play that just summed up the seasons
68 for both sides. And you can understand that if De Gea was
69 frustrated, you can understand why, he's been on the wrong end of
70 too much of this.
71 **JC:** I mean, just frustrated, Trent Alexander-Arnold, I think, tried
72 to kick the ball in the net, it just went past him, but Gary, you
73 just mentioned why Dalot was being picked, I understand exactly
74 where you are coming from, Mo Salah likes to come inside, he can
75 defend from that right foot, but if you want to mark Mo Salah, you
76 better make sure you run back, and you're quick enough if you're
77 going to run back with him. Left completely wanting there on the far
78 side, Dalot.
79 **MT:** Alexander-Arnold. Salah, as you all know, is short of goals but
80 you're not short of goal against Manchester United, seven in his

last five appearances. Hat trick of course, and the five-nil. It's
very hard, but it's very early in the evening. And there were seven
minutes gone. There is applause all around Anfield for Manchester
United's absent number seven, Cristiano Ronaldo, the tragic loss,
the starter. A dark shadow over this evening, thoughts from all of
us with him and his family and certainly everybody in this stadium
paying their respects. Well, you can talk about this rivalry, it's
as sharp as it can be at times in English football, but everyone on
the same page here. The page of condolences.
GN: There was a massive touch of class that, from Liverpool and I'm
sure Cristiano Ronaldo's watching, he would welcomed it.
MT: It gets worse for Manchester United, no disrespect for Jesse
Lingard, who's coming on and had to change the starting eleven or
about to, Paul Pogba limping. Here's Thiago. Van Dijk. Here's
Fabinho. Salah losing out to Dalot. Rashford, (…)off as he thought he
was caught from behind, but Martin Atkinson, the referee, didn't see
it that way, but he has recognised the need for this early
substitution. Paul Pogba left in difficult and different
circumstances, the game on Saturday, and Jesse Lingard is the last
Manchester United player to score here in this fixture.
GN: Well, the thing is that could be Paul Pogba's last minutes in
the Manchester United shirt we've just seen, if that injury lasts
for a few weeks.
MT: Liverpool have already guaranteed that they'll finish above
United, it's only the sixth time in the thirtieth Premier League
season that's happened, but four of those times have been under
Jürgen Klopp.
GN: Fernandes has gone into the centre midfield.
JC: Martin, you mentioned Mo Salah before in terms of his goals, the
worry was not just the goals it was actually his general play, but
he has looked razor sharp in his last two games, not all about the
goals Mo Salah, who started this game, the first ten minutes, then
penetrating runs in behind. Looks back to his best.
MT: And very involved in the goal, of course. Matip, Fabinho and van
Dijk, would be the main areal treats, Mané of course very good in
the air as well, goes out to Thiago tries to craft the pass here,
and a looping header from Luis Diaz, it's just off target.
GN: Well, it's just a touch high for Diaz, I think he tries to knock
it down to Salah.
MT: De Gea trying to pick out the head of Wan-Bissaka to flick it
on. Remember, they've won in the last ten at Anfield in the league,
Liverpool, and they've made a good start towards number eleven.
Alexander-Arnold, cleared by Lindelöf. Van Dijk, and Fabinho.
Henderson, was challenged but still got his pass away. Salah.
Fabinho, that must been a handball. Manchester United making a bit
of a meal of trying to clear it, and not too much in terms of
options further forward for and out ball at the moment. Rashford is
fixed for that, but they can't get him away, it was a chance to do

129 so. Such a contrast to last season, the home form was, you'd have to
130 look it up to believe it even now. They won six in a row. The fans
131 are back, the Anfield knack is back, and Manchester United are
132 feeling the force early here.
133 **GN:** Yeah, interesting that Jesse Lingard comes on in front of Jadon
134 Sancho, as well to take up that position on the right-hand side.
135 **MT:** Another one who looks to be hoping moving on at the end of the
136 season. Anthony Elanga. Easy for Fabinho. Henderson, cut out by
137 Maguire. Phil Jones did play a game against Wolves early in the year
138 and did very well actually, a game Manchester United did lose at
139 home and back here he is. Has worn that number four shirt, he's been
140 on the squad list as number four since twenty-eleven, hasn't played
141 very much in the last four years or so. Alisson out. Lingard trying
142 to make a run in behind. Mané.
143 **GN:** We saw the challenge for Phil Jones on the goal where Harry
144 Maguire gets caught in between, doesn't quite go in on Mané, doesn't
145 really drop off and Phil Jones didn't really either drop himself or
146 step up to play offside, he was, they're all in between. Obviously
147 it's a new system, new players in a system, and it's some place to
148 try and test it.
149 **JC:** That Liverpool right sides causing real problems, the
150 interchanging of the positions, as you see Henderson now in almost a
151 full back position, Trent Alexander-Arnold in what you'd call the
152 midfield position, that constant move is causing huge problems on
153 that side.
154 **MT:** And out by Dalot. An authoritative challenge by van Dijk.
155 Thiago, clever footwork, Mané, a deflection earns Liverpool a
156 corner.
157 **GN:** Well, Thiago, ultimate confidence, passes it into Mané. It is
158 looking ominous this, Manchester United, Liverpool, smell blood.
159 **MT:** Robertson setting up goals for Konaté, picked Fabinho, who is a
160 target this time. Diaz. Robertson crossing on the run. () been
161 playing pretty inclusively in this half of the pitch at the moment.
162 Thiago. It's a lovely ball by Thiago but Henderson can't make the
163 maximum, probably he's... And able to seize it back as well, they've
164 gifted back to him, Dalot. Thiago, and Dalot does make the
165 interception. One thing that Manchester United must have taken into
166 account the last three games Liverpool have played, they've conceded
167 seven goals. Got to get the ball in the other half of the pitch and
168 try to examine how that's been happening. Thiago.
169 **GN:** Martin look, basically Manchester United are going under here.
170 For five minutes, someone out there, David De Gea trying to pull
171 them together. But honestly, at this moment in time, they're there
172 for the beating. You see De Gea, he sees the danger. He can see
173 what's happening in front of him.
174 **MT:** He's seen it happening before this season. In by Alexander-
175 Arnold. Henderson is across, Robertson had stayed back. Matip.
176 Manchester United have won only one of the last eleven Premier

177 League meetings between these two. Marcus Rashford got a couple of
178 goals at Old Trafford. And another nervy unManchester United tight
179 moment.
180 **JC:** Manchester United got a few problems all over the pitch at the
181 moment, one of the biggest is Thiago. He's making the ball talk in
182 his first nineteen minutes.
183 **MT:** Robertson waiting for van Dijk and Matip. Attempt to control the
184 volley by Jordan Henderson.
185 **JC:** Well, we're gonna look back at that goal from Diaz. Throughout
186 Jürgen Klopp's time, the big thing that really stood out is the
187 penetrating runs from the wide players, but I call them wide
188 players. He played very narrow and that's why he scored so many
189 goals. Diaz, there right in front of the six-yard box, don't find
190 him out wide, you don't find Salah out wide, or Sadio Mané. He's
191 another player, the prototype player for Jürgen Klopp, and boy is he
192 delivering. Have Manchester United got the players, Gary, or the
193 system, the setup, to actually weather this Liverpool storm?
194 **GN:** No. I was just thinking then just watching United, obviously
195 Liverpool are dominant-dominating the game in every sense. But what
196 Manchester United don't have is a set of values and principles, a
197 system to fall back upon to get them out of a ten-fifteen minute
198 period in the game, it's just hope. Aside from the fact they don't
199 do the basics very well, they just don't have a clear system of play
200 to withstand pressure from a major team, and it's just individuals
201 trying at the very best to do their jobs. There's no unit or
202 collective at all.
203 **MT:** Here's Fabinho. Now Robertson. There's a real contrast between
204 assurance and uncertainty. Liverpool, with a definite identity.
205 Manchester United haven't yet been able to announce the signing of
206 the new manager, and I believe it will be Erik ten Hag.
207 **GN:** Yeah, it's almost like the hierarchy of the club are willing for
208 the announcement of ten Hag to almost throw it forward to next
209 season and take the heat off what's happening in the present.
210 Arsenal Saturday, Chelsea next week. It's a bit more of a storm to
211 weather, yeah.
212 **MT:** Matip, did well to find the pass to Mané, in for Salah. Superb.
213 Liverpool at their very best and Mo Salah is back on the goal trail
214 again. The great touch by Matip, in the heart of that. Two-nil.
215 **GN:** Look, let's be clear this Manchester United team are a waste of
216 space, but the football that Liverpool have delivered here is
217 absolutely sublime, the quality, that pass from Mané, that touch
218 from Salah and that finish are world class, and it's why Liverpool
219 go into this last ten or eleven games this season in an unbelievable
220 position to sweep up. De Gea, helpless as he's watching hopeless in
221 front of him.
222 **MT:** Yeah, I've been talking about Mo Salah and I don't need to talk
223 to him about this so-called dip in form, it just happens from time
224 to time you get on scoring streaks. He may well have started another

225 scoring streak here, hattrick at Old Trafford and the goal that puts
226 them two in front here at Anfield.
227 **GN:** Martin, I said two weeks ago that people were looking at
228 Liverpool's fixture list as if it was more difficult because they
229 had the Merseyside Derby and the other game against their great
230 rival Manchester United. That's on paper. These are the two easiest
231 fixtures in the league at this moment in time.
232 **MT:** Never in the history of this great rivalry has either team had a
233 season where there's been a margin of seven goals, which there is at
234 the moment, and we're not finished yet.
235 **GN:** Martin, I've been watching Manchester United for forty-two
236 years, this is as bad as it gets, honestly. Watched them through the
237 eighties, I've not seen a group of players lacking in appetite for
238 the club as much in my time alive watching the club.
239 **MT:** Robertson. Goes off Sadio Mané for goal kick. He's got a very
240 generous smile, Kenny Dalglish, when he's happy, he isn't always
241 happy, but I think he's pretty pleased with what he's seeing here.
242 Thiago, and pout by Diaz.
243 **JC:** I just mentioned Mo Salah doesn't need a goal to show that he's
244 back. We can see there's the energy, the sharpness, I think he
245 started the second-half at Manchester City. They created that goal
246 for Sadio Mané. I mean, for years, Gary, we've been in this position
247 where Manchester United are now. Regularly at times maybe losing
248 games too, your team, and I'd like think we had a bit more fight
249 than this, a bit more backbone, made it a bit more competitive at
250 times.
251 **GN:** Look, there's a long way to go in this game, but to be honest
252 with you, it brings fear, not hope, but I have to say I thought
253 Manchester United looked promising toward the end of last season,
254 the demise and where they are at today, all season has been
255 alarming. And what we're watching at the moment is nothing, this is
256 just a nothing.
257 **MT:** Well, Jürgen Klopp, like every manager, he will take one game at
258 a time, but it could come a point this evening, where he'll be
259 thinking about the Derby on Saturday. Every Liverpool voice, every
260 Liverpool face revelling in this situation at the expense of the
261 team that's given them so many closer contests than this one is
262 shaping up to be. Fabinho, Salah won't catch that. Fernandes. (…)
263 supporting here, and Wan-Bissaka but...
264 **GN:** That's a centre forward tracking back at left back.
265 **MT:** And he is a centre forward, the way things have panned out, as
266 Jamie was saying earlier, it looks like this is the first choice
267 front three now, but there's plenty of competition for him.
268 **JC:** Yeah, I think there's almost a nine out of the eleven that
269 Jürgen Klopp knows is in his best eleven. I think what's up for
270 debate now, maybe a centre back or maybe one of the midfield
271 positions.
272 **MT:** Salah. It was, it was tempting for Alexander-Arnold to try and

273 go for goal, but De Gea was scampering that-that, well, what he must
274 be thinking. Robertson. Here's Thiago. Robertson again.
275 **GN**: As I said before the second goal went in that Liverpool looks
276 like (…) the confidence there, the authority, the football. It's
277 something else.
278 **MT**: They're on the edge of a mourning here, Manchester United.
279 Robertson. Headed away by Jones. Matip. Fabinho. Mané just had the
280 cheques to stay onside and gets into feet instead. Now Diaz. Thiago.
281 Looking at the different states of the two clubs before the and the
282 teams were announced really, you're only looking at maybe hope for
283 Manchester United, there's something inside the fixture that could
284 produce a response beyond the kind of football that that they've had
285 to get used to over the last six months or so, or even longer.
286 **GN**: You're working on the theory that they've looked at the fixture,
287 and it absolutely means something to them from a historical point of
288 view, that was never going to happen.
289 **MT**: Yeah, yeah.
290 **GN**: They want this season over these Manchester United players hide
291 behind a new manager, blame it on the old excuse mentality, running
292 right through the club.
293 **MT**: Liverpool aren't wasting the chance to make that very point. So
294 much rivalry between the cities of Liverpool and Manchester and so
295 many fronts, whether he'll be in Manchester, whether there's a
296 second departure shortly to come, that's what to all the signs seem
297 to suggest. Thiago, (…) a stroll, what a pass for Salah, and a
298 smothering save, but a clean one from David De Gea, it wasn't a
299 clean shot in the end.
300 **GN**: Well, Thiago has been absolutely sensational, this pass. He's
301 been a joy to watch so far in this game. Salah and him. Very top of
302 their games.
303 **MT**: Diaz. And like. Van Dijk trying to emphasise the point by
304 slaloming through himself, but there was a bit of resistance at the
305 end. Resistance that (…) were facing.
306 **GN**: That could be costly if it's more than a kick. Still limping,
307 Virgil van Dijk.
308 **MT**: Diaz, still going. Another corner. Half an hour gone,
309 Liverpool's half an hour. Phil Jones is trying to get his match
310 lungs, his match legs.
311 **GN**: I mean look, I feel sorry for Phil Jones, it was a massive ask
312 for him to come into this fixture against this team in the current
313 team that he's playing in. Really is in a system that they're not
314 used to. In a position he's not used to.
315 **MT**: Alexander-Arnold across to take this corner. And have another
316 one to take as well.
317 **GN**: Well, it's some delivery from Trent Alexander-Arnold and it's
318 some header from Maguire. It looked like Fabinho at one point was in
319 front of him, just in that zonal position and he just gets there,
320 the United centre back.

321 **MT:** It is De Gea is this time, to punch away. Henderson to flip it
322 back in, van Dijk wins it and wondered whether the flag was going
323 up, it did go up in the end.
324 **GN:** Yeah, I thought Mané was offside from the header from van Dijk.
325 Just thought he went into a position, yeah, he was just ahead of
326 that last United...
327 **MT:** It wouldn't have counted.
328 **GN:** …defender.
329 **MT:** Had a pretty tough time ten days ago on Merseyside, at Goodison
330 Park, David De Gea described his teammates really showing us a
331 disgrace. And what are you going to say about this one? He's got to
332 make all those saves.
333 **GN:** I think it's every team that you watch play against a top team,
334 they're compact, the thirty, thirty-five yards from back to front,
335 Manchester United, about sixty yards from the-from the centre back
336 to the centre forward when they're defending. There's absolutely
337 acres of space. They do have a corner though.
338 **MT:** They do have a corner. Near the half-way line, but they do have
339 some aerial potential here, probably the captain, using Jones as a
340 screen. It was towards Maguire who is able to knock it down. Falling
341 for that kind of kick from Alisson, it was superb, Diaz. Salah.
342 Nearly. Quite a computer game move. Bruno Fernandes looking for some
343 help but is wasn't forth coming. Mané, falls over, here's Fabinho
344 trying to find a route through, and Diaz was offside.
345 **GN:** Offside.
346 **MT:** It will be checked.
347 **GN:** Yeah, I think there was a touch on the way through there's a
348 brilliant bit of play from Fabinho, but I think there's a touch on
349 the way through there, from Salah. Diaz is already offside anyway.
350 **MT:** Fantastic clearance moments ago from Alisson trying to get in to
351 the stylish passing we often think about Manchester City as the
352 passer at the top two. At Liverpool, they have their own methods,
353 and it's often more direct.
354 **JC:** I mean, I mentioned Jordan Henderson before the game, there's no
355 doubt he's been disappointed. Being out of the team of late. He's
356 certainly shown a lot since they started this game and only
357 associate the energy with this Liverpool team with some of the
358 football here has been out of this world, the first thirty-five
359 minutes and we can be critical of Manchester United, but I don't
360 think many teams have been able to live with Liverpool in this first
361 half, the football that they've played and the intensity they've
362 shown.
363 **MT:** They want to be the quad squad. Already one trophy bag, the
364 Carabao Cup, they beat Chelsea, they're going to play them in the FA
365 Cup final now, after the semi-finals just for a little touch in
366 there that allowed Mané to be onside and here's Luis Diaz,
367 Henderson, and it did look offside in the first place. He's the
368 governor.

369 **JC:** Yeah, you've mentioned his influence on the game, see the top
370 five for Liverpool. That's certainly not a shock. For the
371 performances that we've seen from Thiago these last sorts of two or
372 three months. That's the reason why Jürgen Klopp brought him to this
373 club, there's no doubt what we've seen in those last few months,
374 there's something different than what we've seen on that Liverpool
375 midfield for the last four or five years. There was a passing play
376 on Saturday that was absolutely out of this world. Pass one player,
377 switch the play, and we've seen more of that tonight.
378 **MT:** Jürgen Klopp incidentally, the first Liverpool manager to go
379 seven games unbeaten against United. This would be the eighth. So
380 there are stories that he turned Manchester United down when he was
381 approached when he was still the manager of Dortmund. The time he
382 felt was right to come to the Premier League was Liverpool who
383 offered the opportunity. Well, it's the Merseyside Derby on Sunday,
384 we've got it for you from four o'clock and it's and of course with
385 their own issues, they play tomorrow at home to Leicester. Lessen
386 their worries, I'm sure Brendan Rodgers' team will have their own
387 view on that. Wan-Bissaka, more out of the team than in it recently.
388 On the high line, well, Marcus Rashford was in behind for a couple
389 of goals scored by Benfica here, Jamie the high line was caught too
390 high, the fact they both were ruled out for offside and VAR gave the
391 goal.
392 **JC:** Yeah, they do play that game, but it certainly works for
393 Liverpool. I'm not sure if he was just offside. I'm not sure, but
394 they certainly have the best goalkeeper in the world in dealing with
395 one-v-ones, you don't expect every team at some stage in a game
396 through ninety minutes to maybe just get that one chance up against
397 the Liverpool goalkeeper just whether they can finish.
398 **GN:** Well, that was a chance. Marcus Rashford just miscontrolled it.
399 **MT:** Here's Thiago, searching for the ball, slide ruling the pass.
400 Henderson. Fabinho. Here's van Dijk. Alexander-Arnold, and again.
401 **GN:** What you said before, Jamie, about how well Liverpool are
402 playing, they are playing really well, but Manchester United are
403 walking. They're in shape, but they're walking. The lot of them.
404 **JC:** That's what this team does.
405 **GN:** You look at them there, which one of them looks alert, which one
406 of them looks like they're going to press. At best it's an amble,
407 most of them are (…).
408 **MT:** Just making it, sorry Jamie.
409 **JC:** Let's talk about Manchester United in terms of how can you play
410 well in the structure of the club as how it is. How no one knows who
411 the manager, I'll be honest with you, I just think that's nonsense.
412 I've been in situations where we've had managers not doing well and
413 the ownership, the supporters haven't been happy when some never put
414 in performances like that, and they had some bad ones, I can assure
415 you.
416 **GN:** Shockers.

417 **JC:** Mine or them?
418 **MT:** Here's Fabinho. Jones played Diaz in. Yeah, there are
419 explanations, but no excuses surely.
420 **GN:** I just think when you look at the shape of the team now, look at
421 this, the two up front just got played through, then they get played
422 through, I mean look at the expanse between the front and the back
423 and the space. It's unbelievable. And then they get into shape and
424 walk.
425 **MT:** Yeah, I thought the German coaches wanted to press all the time.
426 **JC:** That went out the window after about two weeks that.
427 **MT:** At Old Trafford, you mean? They've had some battles in the past
428 these two, but not for over a decade. This is not much of a battle
429 from Rangnick's team. They're holding on, for half time at two-nil.
430 There was the chance for Marcus Rashford, we've had a look at that
431 replay, he was onside...
432 **GN:** Yeah. Yeah, this is it. It's just on, his touch just took it
433 away.
434 **MT:** A rare chance, but it was one.
435 **GN:** He had a good view, he was watching the ball come on to that
436 foot. Just slides off the outside of his boot.
437 **MT:** Liverpool looking to make it three before halftime. Thiago.
438 Manchester United pushing out, not with any great emphasis, maybe he
439 can, Lingard going forward, he's stopped. Thiago showing he can
440 tackle as well, Alexander-Arnold. No shortage of options to his
441 left, and the subjects of the left, here's the left back who is
442 always full of adventure. Diaz. Mané. It's like they're playing with
443 thirteen or Manchester United playing with nine. Manchester United
444 coming here tonight for a win that would've put them joint fourth in
445 the Premier League. Surely behind Tottenham on goal difference, but
446 that incentive hasn't been able to produce the great desire.
447 **GN:** The raise for top four-top four, is that bad, it's good.
448 **MT:** Alisson's ball. That is a typical moment.
449 **GN:** Honestly...
450 **MT:** Really favourite to get there, Jordan Henderson...
451 **GN:** No, it's a joke that. Honestly.
452 **MT:** Diaz has a go, and De Gea well behind it, textbook save.
453 **GN:** Well, he's gone down, Marcus Rashford. Matip, helping him up,
454 just stands his ground, the centre back.
455 **MT:** Ready one early injury of course, if you joined us late, Paul
456 Pogba went off in the opening minutes. Replaced by Jesse Lingard.
457 Salah. Here's Matic. Out by Henderson.
458 **GN:** Wan-Bissaka has actually switched, he's on to the left wing
459 back, Dalot over here on the right. Whether it's just something, the
460 temporary situation, (…) forward now.
461 **MT:** The added minute. Thiago, had such a great half. Do you want to
462 have one or two final words on the first half gentlemen?
463 **JC:** I love more than that. No, I think Liverpool, some of the
464 football has been absolutely outstanding, being held by Manchester

465 United's performance, as we all could see, just so evident in this
466 first forty-five minutes, the difference between the two clubs at
467 this moment.
468 **MT:** Alisson read that very well and (…) that was a little warning
469 for Liverpool right on half time, where they started so brightly and
470 Manchester United so dully. Luis Diaz set up by Mo Salah, Salah got
471 the second, and the Liverpool fans have been steeped in enjoyment
472 here, they've seen their old rivals look distinctly second best.
473 Five-nil it was, remember at Old Trafford for Liverpool. They've
474 already got two without reply here. And the difference between the
475 two clubs, totally emphasised on this April evening on Merseyside.
476 Hold on. Two nil at the break.
477 **MT:** It is perhaps not as a surprise for many of you watching
478 Manchester United have won just four of their last thirteen games in
479 all competitions. Liverpool one defeat in twenty-four, only two
480 Premier League defeats all season. Fewer than Manchester City, and
481 they and the City are setting standards that others are finding it
482 hard to live with week in, week out, not just when they play one of
483 the top two, chasing the experience for Manchester United thus far,
484 but they've got another half to have a crack at the Anfield team.
485 Thiago. Just a couple of moments, on right on half time, when
486 Alisson cleared and one when Rashford couldn't control where this
487 potential weakness of the very high line, or vulnerable point, and
488 they've just been exposed by Rangnick's team.
489 **JC:** I mean, there's a lot of talk about Liverpool's high line. It's
490 just Liverpool's line. It's just that's what they do, whether we
491 call it a high line, a deep, it's-t's what Liverpool do, you think
492 of how many times Liverpool win the ball back off Manchester United,
493 they take that risk of saying "OK. You will go through on goal maybe
494 once in the game, you've got the best goalkeeper in the world one-v-
495 one, and the amount of times you win this ball back off here because
496 of the high line, high press, the compactness".
497 **MT:** Given away by van Dijk. And Manchester United have a corner, get
498 the next goal and anything is possible.
499 **GN:** Yeah, that's the-the rally call from Robertson saying to van
500 Dijk: "Come on. Can't let complacency set in". That is the danger
501 for Liverpool. It was so easy for them in the first half, they come
502 out at a lesser level.
503 **MT:** Thiago heads away. And breakaway, he was halted but not
504 unfairly. And Robertson, back on his feet, but back on his feet to
505 foul and he's retreating back to his defensive position.
506 **GN:** Well, I thought he got the ball, the-the challenge was high
507 because the ball was high, but I actually thought he got the ball,
508 Jesse Lingard. He did. Whether he actually touches Robertson first.
509 **MT:** Maguire's on the move. Back in by Matic. Mané, couldn't see a
510 pass and Fabinho just put it out of harm's way.
511 **GN:** Well, Jürgen Klopp snapping at Virgil van Dijk, absolutely
512 snapped at him for that little bit of lapse of play on that far

513 side, shows you the standard no matter how good you are, he'll still
514 have a go at you.
515 **MT**: Here's Salah.
516 **GN**: The interesting thing was van Dijk has acknowledged him and
517 nodded.
518 **MT**: As the old cliché, two-nil is a dangerous lead, although the
519 good you are and getting to two-nil, the show is not complete.
520 Fabinho. Thiago, who took over to his tempo. Matip, and Salah (…)
521 the pass. Wan-Bissaka has started to play at left back at the start
522 of this second half, Dalot on the right. Van Dijk across, Jürgen
523 Klopp will be happy with that. Full concentration. Fabinho. Mané.
524 It's important for Liverpool to keep the energy up, temptations when
525 you know that every game is like a final, that you'd think that
526 maybe this one's put to bed, we'll think about the next one, but not
527 in that position here.
528 **GN**: No, it's that fine line with Liverpool here of drawing
529 Manchester United out, bringing them on so they can go at them all.
530 Also maybe being a little bit more passive in their possession, not
531 being as direct and just letting Manchester United off a little bit.
532 It's that fine line.
533 **MT**: The ball served from Sancho didn't come to anything. Thiago. It
534 looked as though he might have just pushed it too far ahead, but
535 he's quick enough to get there and get fouled. Henderson. Thiago.
536 Unbeaten at home this season, but it's the run of wins they need to
537 continue here, Alisson again might have got the manager's heart
538 fluttering again. And here's Salah, too much of a hurry. Breaks for
539 Alexander-Arnold. van Dijk. He's trying to take the in-field, it is
540 very much with the help of Salah and Mané when he plays wide, doing
541 a good work, the best work in narrow positions, to the centre now,
542 Luis Diaz. Clearing left. Couldn't quite find him.
543 **JC**: Watching Thiago, it's like he's been in the backyard with kids.
544 The only thing for him, as we mentioned with van Dijk early on,
545 there a few signs (…) in the first half, couldn't say he was getting
546 casual but it was that easy for him, just dribbling past players.
547 Just gotta-gotta be careful, Liverpool, the complacency. That's why
548 see Jürgen Klopp would be frustrated. Next goal can either bring
549 Manchester United back into the game, and actually kill them.
550 **MT**: You very rarely see complacency from Liverpool under Klopp,
551 won't have it. Elanga. van Dijk, could've headed it back, it was an
552 awkward ball dropping, probably wasn't sure what was around him, and
553 what might have been behind him. Matip. Alexander-Arnold. Headed
554 back by Maguire. Been a really tough time for Harry Maguire as he
555 gave a very honest and honourable interview before the game to us.
556 Might been difficult, he didn't shirk any of the questions. Fabinho.
557 The possession is coming back for Liverpool and now it's the
558 penetration they're looking for. Fabinho.
559 **GN**: Well, it's probably one of the observations in the early days of
560 Jürgen Klopp that they couldn't keep possession well enough, that

561   they were a counterattacking team, they were really frantic, but
562   what they've developed in these last two or three years is into an
563   all-round team that could do all things and pass the ball really
564   well, control the game. Manchester City-like at times in this part
565   of the match.
566   **MT:** And when necessary, be street fighters, as you said, in the
567   second-half at the Etihad.
568   **GN:** Yeah.
569   **MT:** Yes, Sean Dyche, been a shock to many in football that he
570   finally decided to terminate his employment, having Jürgen Klopp,
571   over six years now, as the longest serving current Premier League
572   manager. Won't be long until Sean is back at work, I'm sure.
573   Fernandes, for Sancho. Rashford inside here, others arriving too.
574   Fernandes one of them. Comes for Sancho, and it's a shot, not
575   necessarily the most troublesome shot for Alisson, but a little sign
576   that Manchester United might be finding avenues to explore an
577   Anfield. (…) by Alexander-Arnold. Bold challenge by Lindelöf. Have a
578   look at it after.
579   **GN:** Well, Thiago saying that Lindelöf comes through the back of
580   Mané, but, just thought he got round the side of him.
581   **MT:** If you're gonna play...
582   **GN:** Maybe it was a foul.
583   **MT:** … back to goal through the middle, you're gonna get that a few
584   times.
585   **JC:** Whether he got there first or he fouled him, it doesn't matter,
586   at least he made the challenge. It's so much better in terms of
587   actually pressing from the front maybe winning the odd ball in
588   midfield. That's what we they lacking in the first forty-five
589   minutes.
590   **MT:** Drop-ball for United. Matic to Wan-Bissaka. Matic again, who
591   could have stayed another year, could have activated the clause in
592   his contract. Had made-up his mind and he wants to move on, and play
593   more regularly. Thiago, the epitome of deafness on a football field.
594   **GN:** Yeah, I think the things that helped United in the first ten
595   minutes in the second-half is that Liverpool has passed it but not
596   really to score and hurt United, it's just probably hanging United
597   off the hook a little bit.
598   **JC:** I think the change of system as well, Gary, now you've got those
599   wider players a little bit higher, you can maybe almost push it on
600   the full backs. When you play five at the back it almost feels like
601   the outlaw of the opposition, as always, full backs in the right
602   positions. See the difference, here Liverpool joining possession.
603   Really troubling Manchester United.
604   **MT:** Ball out by Alisson for Robertson. Thiago. It's better from
605   Manchester United, they've found a bit of space. Maybe even more
606   space in really dangerous areas, here comes Jadon Sancho, and he's
607   still going, but stopped by England colleague Alexander-Arnold,
608   although Sancho wasn't in the last squad and Alexander-Arnold was

609 injured. Manchester United get a free kick here. Now just beginning
610 to show some signs of life.
611 **GN**: Yeah. Last two or three minutes, as I say, just Liverpool just
612 passing it around really without purpose, it's just allowed
613 Manchester United to get a little bit of momentum. It's a good
614 break, Elanga set Sancho free and when he has got the ball it just
615 looked like it's a little bit interesting for him, Trent Alexander-
616 Arnold does well initially.
617 **MT**: It's Bruno Fernandes over the free kick.
618 **JC**: They gotta be careful with Lingard here, Liverpool.
619 **MT**: Not according to plan. We've seen that expression a lot. This
620 time in the Premier League dugouts, Ralf Rangnick. Very thoughtful
621 man, an academic man, not quite the charisma of Jürgen Klopp, but
622 who have? Dalot. Pin ball. It's risky from Alisson, Liverpool get
623 away with it. It's a little bit more fight in the United challenges,
624 a little bit more belief and they do get the ball.
625 **JC**: It's obviously, what has been said at half-time. Different type
626 of team and of course they're fighting for their own battles, that
627 top four position, but you'd think Manchester United were absolutely
628 desperate to stop Liverpool doing they're looking to do this season
629 as well. Sure that's gotta be a part of the motivation.
630 **MT**: But the only two recent games they've won in the Premier League
631 have been courtesy of brilliant Cristiano Ronaldo hattricks, and
632 without him they're not the same. Thiago. Mané. Henderson. Salah.
633 (…) will get that out, Wan-Bissaka may have his (…) but he's quick.
634 Sancho, going into trouble. For Mané, and Salah back to Mané. Thiago
635 was feeling rather passive in that situation, he come up with a
636 headed pass in the end. And Fabinho, has been amongst the goals this
637 season, simply more than usual. And there's an incident on the edge
638 of the box. Might interest VAR.
639 **GN**: Well, it's Maguire, at the edge of the box with Henderson.
640 **JC**: No, I don't think it's too much in it. Just runs across him.
641 Just treads on the back of his ankle. Do you think that would affect
642 the ambience of the England squad, that Liverpool-Manchester United
643 rivalry that we used to have?
644 **MT**: They do eat at the same tables these days. Throwed by Dalot.
645 Liverpool fluid in the first half. And to Salah, another idea,
646 almost trying to repeat what Mané did for his goal, but here
647 Manchester United on the break, seeking a foothold into the match.
648 With Lingard, and going for the shot was Elanga. Won by Wan-Bissaka
649 and Alexander-Arnold with a very functional sort of clearance, and
650 it's coming straight back at Liverpool now. Sancho. Rashford, away
651 from Lingard. The Anfield crowd aware of the consequences should the
652 concentration waiver here.
653 **GN**: Yeah, you're absolutely right, they can see the danger. The
654 Manchester United goal would bring and it might be coming.
655 **MT**: Might well be coming, were it not for Alisson it would be
656 coming, but it wouldn't have counted, the flag. Of course the

657 assistants these days, they wait for the end of the period of play.
658 The flag did not, not for there.
659 **GN:** Oh, well, I think he's onside there, that goal would have stood.
660 Alisson, big saves.
661 **MT:** And now Manchester United are hunting down Alisson.
662 **GN:** Liverpool has just been a little bit complacent. Passing it
663 sideways and backwards, van Dijk snapped because he knows the game
664 has swung and his manager is not less pleased.
665 **MT:** It's a good job he's a long way away from his manager. The look
666 of a man who is just slightly worried that the grip which was very
667 firm in the first half has been loosened here, partly by Manchester
668 United's improvement, and partly by his team's perhaps lack of
669 initiatives that they showed so impressively in the first half.
670 **JC:** You see the difference there, when that ball goes into Mané,
671 Lindelöf is right up behind and gives a foul away. You think of the
672 actual, I don't know if it was the first ball, the ball comes into
673 Mané, Harry Maguire doesn't go and engage stands off him. That was a
674 big problem in the first half for Manchester United.
675 **MT:** Salah. Henderson. And again that rather typified what we've been
676 talking about. Rashford. Can they find some belief here, Manchester
677 United, it might be a twist to this tale. There's still a big if.
678 Liverpool have gone off the boil. And at times off the ball, but,
679 they got it back this time. Diaz, in his own way trying to (…) but
680 Martin Atkinson says no foul. Mané. All these players had, of
681 course, had a long stint at Wembley on Saturday, big pitch,
682 emotional occasion. A hot day in London. Thiago can sustain the
683 influence that he had in the first half, we'll be finding out.
684 Here's Mané, easily cut out by Maguire. Fernandes. Wan-Bissaka.
685 Lindelöf. And four forward in red here. Mané, oh goodness me. What
686 accuracy at a time of need, strange to say. Just drifting away from
687 Liverpool, not by far, but the margins are tight at this stage of
688 the season and then Sadio Mané effortlessly finds the bottom corner
689 and it's three-nil.
690 **JC:** Let Luis Diaz, and Sadio Mané gets a goal. But Liverpool have
691 got a player here, a real top player. He's got his goal earlier in
692 the game and he's put this game to bed now. See Luis Diaz here, it's
693 a fantastic finish with that left foot, it really is. Brilliant from
694 Robertson, they've been poor in the second half, Liverpool. But you
695 always feel, as soon as they show a little bit of quality and he
696 just picks his mate out there in the centre.
697 **MT:** Well, each of the front three has scored and each of the front
698 three has assisted on a goal. That perfect combination.
699 **JC:** They're absolutely sensational, the sensational man, and they
700 really are and Jürgen Klopp knows that is goodnight Vienna for
701 Manchester United.
702 **MT:** And the margin over the season is now eight-nil. A misjudgement
703 by Matip. A few words between Henderson, maybe not words, just a
704 look or two. Well, no sooner as the front three completed those

705 facts Diogo Jota is summoned for the last twenty minutes. Luis Diaz,
706 scored the first, made the third and in such a short space of time
707 has become part of the fabric of this Liverpool Football Club. And
708 that's no respite for Manchester United with the arrival of Jota.
709 Fabinho. Such an efficient finish from Sadio Mané.
710 **GN:** It's just all about the technique he used, the pace that was
711 already on the ball. Wonderfully executed. Clinical from Liverpool.
712 They were slower out the blocks in the second-half.
713 **MT:** For the second time Sadio Mané has ever scored against
714 Manchester United. Under pressure, that was some class by Alisson to
715 the aforementioned Mané.
716 **GN:** It's an unbelievable pass. I just watched the goalkeeper play a
717 pass that I don't think I played in an entire career. I was an
718 outfield player.
719 **MT:** Mané. Henderson. Crowd wanted that to go in the opposite
720 direction. Just as Manchester United were trying to flex those
721 muscles they have brought here, Liverpool have put them in their
722 place. Robertson stepping in. It's a restorative for Liverpool, the
723 third goal, Mané, now looking for a fourth, Salah, but the buzz is
724 back. Lingard. Rashford, () run Alexander-Arnold here. And despite
725 Marcus' protests, it's going to be a goal kick. Not too many
726 protests, he ended up being the ball boy as. Still having a go. He
727 needs a run of games, you feel, to get back to where he was with
728 three hundred games for Manchester United, two hundred Premier
729 League games. Not going to disappear overnight. Salah, Henderson
730 takes over. It's a difficult ball, he's had a good effort at it to
731 find Jota, now Mané. Here's Robertson, but he couldn't keep it.
732 **GN:** The recovery from Robertson there is absolutely outstanding,
733 talk about a player who just gave the ball away, probably fifty-
734 sixty yards away, three-nil up, sprints back. Well, you wouldn't
735 believe.
736 **JC:** You think about how poor Liverpool were in the start of that
737 second half, he changed that by jumping in front, I think it was
738 Elanga, winning that ball and setting Liverpool up on that third
739 goal.
740 **MT:** Wan-Bissaka. Lindelöf, who played along the back line in
741 Rangnick's team. Lingard. Defenders leaving it to Alisson, the
742 goalkeeper. Fabinho. Alexander-Arnold, easy for Maguire to step in
743 that time. And Thiago. Thiago again, and here's Salah, Maguire is
744 back peddling, Salah slipping. The skipper could come away with it,
745 less trouble than he thought he might have been. Here's Bruno
746 Fernandes. It's what they've been doing, Liverpool, got the greatest
747 incentive now to manage the situation, keep the ball. Make sure no
748 one gets injured. Down to Henderson. Mané. Here's Sancho, who's had
749 one or two moments, Rashford's waiting in the middle, (…)bend away
750 from Alisson. And the, might be right in saying, I haven't checked
751 this, but the last team to beat Liverpool here in the league but
752 Fulham and they're having quite a night. They have clinched

753 promotion back to the Premier League. They won at Anfield, but got
754 relegated last season, as you all know, and they beat Preston,
755 three-nil. Congratulations to Marco Silva, his players, Mané, some
756 of those Fulham players I think promoted for a third time. Trying to
757 make it stick when they get up this time. Henderson. Fabinho. Mané,
758 Jota through the middle. Salah, infield. Moving space for Alexander-
759 Arnold, but not enough space for Henderson to, I think it was,
760 giving him the ball. Robertson, his first thought is to drive
761 forward. With three goals in the bank. A massive game coming up on
762 Sunday here.
763 **JC**: Yeah, will be really interesting what Jürgen Klopp does in that
764 game. I think the last couple of games have worked for Liverpool,
765 they've made a brilliant start to the first half. Even first leg
766 against Benfica, almost felt like he could take the foot off the
767 pedal, make changes from the bench as the game went on. But I think
768 there will be two or three games before the end of the season where
769 Jürgen Klopp will make five or six changes from his best team.
770 Because I think the one big thing Liverpool have at the moment is
771 the fitness of all the players and if he can keep that to the end of
772 the season, that gives him a great chance.
773 **MT**: Robertson. Mané. It's just probably Firmino missing tonight.
774 Roberson. He never wants to come off.
775 **GN**: He's been brilliant this second half, Robertson. His appetite to
776 carry on doing the right things, even at three-nil, when his team's
777 up. Thiago, absolutely outstanding all night.
778 **MT**: He first saw Manchester United at Wembley, Barcelona Champions
779 League final twenty-eleven. He was a substitute for Barcelona. He
780 didn't get on the pitch. He dominated the pitch tonight.
781 **JC**: As he did on Saturday, I think there's no doubt that's his best
782 game he ever had on Anfield, I'm sure of it. And you see the
783 appreciation.
784 **MT**: Naby Keita is on, who's been doing well recently in his chances.
785 In the European games, in the FA cup as well, came all the way
786 through Henderson. A bit of ball carrying from Marcus Rashford. Wan-
787 Bissaka. What do we do at Arsenal? Darren Fletcher, Chris Armas and
788 Ralf Rangnick. Could be offside, doesn't matter. Was offside.
789 Rashford not showing the efficiency in front of goal, Sadio Mané
790 exhibited a few minutes ago.
791 **JC**: Yeah, I mentioned Diaz, maybe I did a little bit of disservice
792 to Sadio Mané because the finish is absolutely fantastic. It's the
793 only place he can put it in, and there they know that game is over.
794 And I always go back to the signing of Sadio Mané by Jürgen Klopp,
795 knew he was their first real big player. Look at the reaction of
796 Rangnick, maybe he felt there was still something in the game. Sadio
797 Mané when he first joined, he played right sided with the attack,
798 them and Salah come. He then went to the left, he is outstanding,
799 now Diaz has come. He's now gone central and being outstanding. What
800 a player he's been for Liverpool Football Club. In every position.

801   **MT:** And they were singing "show me the way to go home", and they're
802   about to find it early, United fans, they've done well to stay this
803   long, to be honest. Here's Mané and Keita has forced him too wide.
804   Robertson. Well, at the expense of Manchester United, they have sent
805   their message to Manchester City, Liverpool tonight. And Brighton,
806   of course, playing Manchester City tomorrow, just one at Arsenal and
807   one at Tottenham. No easy games in the Premier League. Elanga off
808   and Hannibal Mejbri who has played more internationals than club
809   games. Is born in France but plays for Tunisia. Signed from Monaco,
810   second taste of the Premier League. It's a big too it. There was a
811   flag from the assistant on the far side to Martin Atkinson about the
812   nature of that Naby Keita challenge.
813   **GN:** Yeah, it didn't look great from Keita, I have to say, I think it
814   was a poor one from here. Have to see it again.
815   **MT:** The VAR have completed their observations on the replays and
816   nothing to report they say to your referee, Martin Atkinson. Jota,
817   here's Salah and here is number four, with the deftest of touches,
818   he picked this game to get this goal scoring touch back and that
819   scoring touch in itself was absolutely delightful. Five at Old
820   Trafford, four at Anfield and still more than five minutes to go.
821   **GN:** Well, I have to say those Liverpool wide strikers, whoever they
822   are, Manchester United just giving it away in a poor area, Hannibal
823   gets caught. But they're the best in the world at making these runs
824   out to win inside the fullback. He still has a bit to do, Salah, but
825   you just fancy him. He's looked class from minute one tonight.
826   There's a little bit of a deflection from Wan-Bissaka which helps
827   him loop it over the goalkeeper, but it's probably a fair reflection
828   of where the two teams are at.
829   **MT:** James Milner is sent on, having had the hug from the manager.
830   Nine goals in his last six games against Manchester United, it took
831   a while to get the first one. Since then, he's barely stopped. Well,
832   you've, it could have been that in the first half, there were
833   periods in the second-half, which didn't look as though it was going
834   to come. But the third goal was crucial and Manchester United had no
835   fuel left in the tank and they were running pretty low right from
836   the start. Alexander-Arnold. Keita. Salah, out comes De Gea, Mané
837   beats him to it but it's forced wide. Here's Rashford. Cut out by
838   Robertson. Martin Atkinson letting the game go on. And now it's been
839   put out so it can be a bit of treatment to Henderson.
840   **GN:** Well, it was Hannibal. I thought the Keita one was worse earlier
841   on. That's a poor one. He's a lucky boy, Keita.
842   **MT:** Well, the both did get booked. Oh, and now it's getting more and
843   more frustrated from the Manchester United point of view. Fernandes
844   gets booked.
845   **GN:** He's a lucky boy as well. He's just lashed out at him there.
846   Frustration. Just kicked him knee-high.
847   **MT:** Frustration at the game. Frustration at the season. Very
848   different for Bruno Fernandes, whose swept all before him, and this

849 year and a half, Liverpool players, I think well aware of the
850 potential for symmetry here to get a fifth goal. Milner. Keita.
851 Well, Hannibal's going to be careful here. And Harry Maguire trying
852 to stand up for a young player, but he's a professional, he
853 shouldn't be charging around, putting his placed on the pitch in
854 such jeopardy.
855 **GN:** To be fair, Martin, at least the kid's showing a little bit of
856 something.
857 **JC:** Exactly.
858 **GN:** Honestly, it takes a young kid to come on and show the rest of
859 them, out to sprint to the ball and put a challenge in. I'm actually
860 proud of him.
861 **JC:** Just a bit of over-exuberance.
862 **GN:** Maybe he doesn't like the idea of Liverpool players passing
863 around him. Wished the rest of them were the same.
864 **MT:** Keita. Liverpool looking for five in added time here at Anfield.
865 Jota. Gary, are you taking any comfort from a decent fifteen minutes
866 at two-nil at the start of the second-half and a youngster rushing
867 around trying to make a few challenges?
868 **GN:** No, I think Manchester United have got everything that
869 Manchester United fans and probably everybody in the country
870 expected tonight. Really, in a poor place. Season's end can't come
871 quick enough. Liverpool, obviously on top of their form, it was
872 always going to be difficult. That fifteen minutes after halftime
873 was more out of Liverpool just being a little bit lethargic rather
874 than Manchester United being brilliant or good. This is a broken
875 Manchester United squad at this moment in time, but that kid, to be
876 fair, he has given it some at least. It's the least you can expect.
877 For many a football fan, for a player wearing the shirt, it's to run
878 around. That Manchester United team in the first half ambled,
879 walked.
880 **MT:** Well...
881 **GN:** It's terrible to watch.
882 **MT:** Maybe a broken squad, do you think it's a broken club, I mean
883 the fans and the owners are going at it hammer and tongs again?
884 **GN:** It's on the edge, Martin, that's for sure.
885 **MT:** Fernandes. Mejbri. Robertson.
886 **GN:** It's a decade of repeated failure. And that's not good enough.
887 **MT:** Oh, here's Salah, on a hattrick of course for the second time
888 this season, against United. He's got a corner, and maybe one more
889 chance.
890 **GN:** Yeah, it's a good recovery from Wan-Bissaka, he's trying to tuck
891 that around, he's onside. Lindelöf rushing up at the last minute, he
892 plays him on. But he just gets back in that recovery slide that he
893 has, Wan-Bissaka, helps him. Saves United from a fifth.
894 **MT:** Well, the big challenge is coming from Manchester, but not from
895 the team that they've faced and pretty much annihilated again
896 tonight. He made the match dance to his tune, Thiago. Last passage

of play, a corner. Very nearly an own goal. But Diogo Dalot. That's
it, Liverpool are top of the Premier League and they can wake up for
such a locking position in the table for the first time since the
start of October. Two points clear, played one game more, yes, City
get their turn tomorrow, yes, but the double over Manchester United
with the biggest margin ever in this historic rivalry. It tells you
so much about the state of both clubs at the moment. Diaz started
it, Mané set up by Diaz scored. Mo Salah got two to get going again
and take his tally in all competitions to thirty. United's lowest
points tally after thirty-three games since the very start of the
Premier League. They come up short again, but Liverpool climb to the
heights, can they stay there? The race is on. The top two have
turned this marathon of a season into a sprint for the line, and
Liverpool at it at full pace tonight. Beating Manchester United,
demolishing them by four goals to-nil.