Russian and English Metaphorics: Comparative Analysis of Biathlon Discourse

Liudmila Osinovskaia
Northern Trans-Ural State Agricultural University, Tyumen, RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Institute of Biotechnology and Veterinary Medicine, Foreign Languages Department

Yuliya Shekhovskaya
Tyumen State University, Tyumen, RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Institute of Humanities and Journalism, English Language Department

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Abstract

In this article, the authors consider semantic and structural features of the metaphor use in the Russian and English biathlon discourse, as well as metaphor role and use in the biathlon mass media discourse framework. The research of biathlon discourse enriches metaphor definition. The concept “biathlon” serves the material for the analysis of metaphorical meaning transfer. The authors underline its importance as a basic model of the text formation. The researchers pay much attention to the question of metaphorical formation role and functions within biathlon mass media discourse. The article contains information on the classification of basic metaphorical models. The study defines groups of Russian and English metaphors in biathlon mass media discourse and reveals their linguistic and intercultural differences. To obtain data, the authors use comparative analysis method of Russian and English metaphors. The authors prove the importance of metaphors in biathlon mass media discourse quantitatively. That lets them assume metaphor as a means of avoiding speech monotony therefore enhancing its emotional influence within biathlon mass media discourse.

Keywords: sports discourse, metaphor, metaphorical model, basic.

1. Introduction

1.1 Sport discourse: Focus on defining specific characteristics

The modern period of human development is characterized by the rapid dissemination of information through print, television, the Internet and radio. Moreover, the role of the media in the life of each person is growing, thus this information is reported to become a tool of control.

Hence there is an increasing interest in studying the media discourse and its varieties. It is worth noting that the media discourse as a type of institutional one is a functionally-conditioned type of discourse. We understand it as a set of speech practices and products of speech
activities in the sphere of mass communication in all the richness and complexity of interaction. The varieties of media discourse are political, advertising, sports, etc.

Within the framework of this article, sports discourse is of particular interest that is why we are going to consider features of sports discourse in more detail.

Despite the fact that many modern linguists are engaged in the study of it, today there is no generally accepted definition of the concept of “sports discourse”.

We have made a review of the scientific literature and could establish that many authors, when defining the concept of “sports discourse”, take the definition of the concept of “discourse” proposed by V. Krasnykh (2003). So, for example, K. Snyatkov suggests that sports discourse is meant to be an oral or written speech which renders the meanings determining sports activity (it is discourse as a process). Besides, it is a set of produced texts in which these meanings are represented (it is discourse as a result). So, discourse is a set of speech works that are recorded in the writing or memory (Snyatkov, 2008).

S. Mamaiko considers sports discourse as a special constructor of social, psychological, cognitive and linguistic factors, which in their unique totality are designed to reflect the entire range of expressive-emotional manifestations of sports competition and adventurism that take place in the context of competing (Mamayko, 2014).

S. Kudrin defines sports discourse as a set of communicative practices that characterize sport as a socio-cultural phenomenon, denoted by a number of extralinguistic factors and developed in the process of establishing the institution of sports (Kudrin, 2011).

L. Isaeva and N. Kazarina tend to understand the term “sports discourse” loosely. These researchers consider sports discourse as a single class of various speech genres, united by one social sphere of functioning that it is a sports activity in all its manifestations (Isayeva, 2012). With this approach, the main agents of the sports discourse are all linguistic personalities who professionally communicate in this area. That is why, along with the basic communicants of the sports discourse including athletes, coaches, referees, sports officials, on the basis of the presence / partial presence / absence of professional competence, one can also distinguish non-basic communicants who are peripheral or “semi-professional” / “non-professional” including doctors, massage therapists, mechanics, fans, journalists, television viewers.

1.2 Goals and genre diversity of sport discourse

The general goal of sports discourse is to focus the efforts of all professionally united individuals and institutions to achieve the best result. The usage of speech strategies and tactics as well as special speech techniques implemented contribute to achieving victory in the competition.

Sports discourse in most cases is a verbal support for achieving sports goals such as achieving sports form, winning a sports competition, receiving priority in sports events and providing the prestige of the state or sports institution which prepares its representative to participate in competition.

Sports discourse is distinguished by its universal quality, particularly, its focus on the basic (vital) needs of the society. It is represented by genre diversity.

According to V. Karasik, the exact selection of these genres can be done on the basis of a deductive model. It takes into account goals, types of participants, types of scenario, ritualization, as well as real and naturally formed patterns of communication (Karasik, 2000).
O. A. Pankratova asserts that the number of sports discourse genres is regulated by the ways sports exists in the society. Based on this, the author identifies the following genres of sports discourse (Pankratova, 2005):

1. A scientific sports article; e.g. is an article about studies of the athlete's physical conditions;
2. A medical and therapeutic conversation; e.g. a psycho-therapist's conversation with a sportsman;
3. A physical education lesson at school;
4. An analysis of a training session or a match;
5. Instructing the athlete by the coach;
6. Sports court; e.g. a discussion of sports functionaries regarding the disqualification of an athlete who used doping in a competition or violated sports rules;
7. A sports interview; e.g. a conversation between sportsmen and journalists immediately after the competition;
8. Sports memoirs of sportsmen who stopped their sports career;
9. A sports commentary/ review;
10. A sports press conference; e.g. a conversation between sportsmen and journalists after a certain time after the competition.

According to K. Snyatkova (2008), the main features of sports discourse include:
- Mental basis;
- Intertextuality;
- Presupposition basis.

To explore this idea, the author denotes the mental base as a set of cognitive structures of different levels in which knowledge about the phenomena of the external world and the features of the speech representation of this knowledge is fixed.

The intertextuality of sports discourse is defined to be the interaction of sports discourse with other types of discourse, including scientific, pedagogical, business, legal, political, military, medical, etc.

As far as the presuppositional basis of sports discourse is concerned, it is manifested in the regular use of sports terminology.

This allows us to say that the conceptual, as well as genre-stylistic and pragmalinguistic originality of texts that relate to sports discourse is largely predetermined by the characteristics of media discourse, where the most important role is given to a stable connection with the audience through information transmission technical means.

Therefore, many researchers studying the features of sports discourse today use the term “media sports” to describe the sociocultural speech activity directly connected with sports topics and objectified in media texts.

Nevertheless, we agree with N. Kuzmina that sports media discourse has not only general characteristics of any media discourse types, due to the mass communication specifics, but it also has its own discursive characteristics determined by the topic of the discussion of the sport in which communication takes place (Kuzmina, 2011).
1.3 Biathlon discourse: Definition and speech representation

Since the material for the practical research part is based on oral and written reports of biathlon competitions, we present our understanding of biathlon discourse. We define biathlon discourse as a speech work in oral or written presentation, created for the purpose of conveying any information from the sphere of biathlon. In a wider sense, biathlon discourse is a coherent text representing the whole complex of interrelationships between man and sport in the creation of which one of the discourse components is related to biathlon (speaker, interlocutor or the content of the message itself).

Among the distinctive features of biathlon discourse as a kind of sports media discourse is its increased expressiveness and emotionality, which is achieved through the use of various means of stylistic imagery, including metaphorization.

The significant quantitative representation of metaphors in the biathlon discourse testifies to the metaphorization of this discourse type and to the virtually limitless potential of the linguistic metaphor as an instrument of sports rhetoric. It is worth paying attention to the fact that metaphor is not just a means of stylistic imagery, but also a cognitive tool based on appealing to objects of a different denotative area and their characteristics in order to more accurately convey information with the simultaneous transmission of emotions, expressiveness, imagery and appraisal.

1.4 Metaphor as a means of sports rhetoric

The origins of research interest in metaphor are usually associated with the name of Aristotle. In his Poetics he first described metaphor as a way of rethinking the meaning of a word based on similarities. According to Aristotle, the metaphor makes it possible and right to “speak about the real simultaneously connecting it with the impossible”. In other words, it is about a way to name an object “by a name that does not belong to it” through an element of similarity, comparison (Aristotle, 2020).

Since the metaphor is considered within the framework of various academic disciplines, each of them works with a fragment that is significant for it, describing only the sides that are relevant to itself.

So, in the sphere of stylistics, a metaphor is understood as “a trope or a figure of speech, consisting in the use of a word denoting a certain class of objects (objects, persons, phenomena, actions or signs) to designate another, similar to the given class of objects or a single object; for example: “wolf, oak, club, snake, lion, rag”, etc. as applied to humans; or “sharp, blunt” – about the properties of the human mind, etc.” (Fox, 2020).

G. Sklyarevskaya, exploring the metaphor within the framework of semiotics, defines this concept as having a secondary indirect nomination with the obligatory preservation of semantic duality and the figurative element. According to the author, the metaphor does not indicate the subject of speech as much as it characterizes it. At the same time, the essence of the metaphor consists in understanding and experiencing phenomena of one kind in terms of one of another kind (Sklyarevskaya, 1993).

O. Glazunova believes that a metaphor or a metaphorical model is “the assimilation of one phenomenon to another on the basis of the semantic proximity of states, properties, actions that characterize these phenomena. As a result words (phrases, sentences) intended to nominate certain objects (situations) of reality are used for naming other objects (situations) on the basis of the conditional identity of the predicative attributes attributed to them” (Glazunova, 2002).
In modern cognitive science, a metaphor is usually defined as a mental operation on conceptual structures (domains, frames, gestalts, mental spaces, etc.), as a way of cognition, categorization, conceptualization, assessment and explanation of the world.

According to J. Lakoff and M. Johnson’s cognitive theory, the metaphor, being a component of not only language, but also thinking, determines the main ways of interpreting reality and has a significant impact on the decision-making process. The metaphor in this case is understood widely. It represents a wide class of cases where we understanding the essences of one conceptual area in terms of another conceptual area that is significantly different from it (Lakoff, 2004).

Metaphor is a way of categorizing reality. R. Hoffman writes about this and draws attention to the fact that regardless of where metaphor is found or used, it always contributes to the enrichment of understanding human actions, knowledge and language (Hoffman, 1987).

Having analyzed all the above definitions, we come to conclusion that the metaphor contributes to the disclosure of the reflected reality features. It is possible since the secondary signs that are presented in the metaphor express moments of sensory clarity. Thanks to the metaphor, our idea of a described object is enriched. The fact is the following. To characterize the object, new phenomena are involved so the existing understanding of the object properties expands. It is where the cognitive significance of the metaphor is. It turns out that besides supplanting the original word meaning, the metaphor constantly participates in the development of language, speech and culture in general.

Metaphors are not only complicated in their structure, but also semantically diverse. Therefore, to systematize metaphors encountered in speech somehow, linguists offer various classifications or typologies of metaphors. Within the framework of this work, consideration of the metaphor classifications allows us to form a more complete idea of how the categorization of reality in sports discourse is carried out through metaphor.

1.5 Metaphor classification diversity

One of the most common classifications was proposed by N. Arutyunova. In this classification, the following types of metaphor were identified (Arutyunova, 1990):

- A nominative metaphor, a feature of which is the name transfer. This type of metaphor consists in replacing one meaning with another;
- A figurative metaphor, which is formed by the transition of the identifying meaning to the predicative and which develops figurative meanings and synonymous means of language;
- A cognitive metaphor based on the shift in the combinability of predicative words; it creates polysemy;
- A generalizing metaphor that erases the boundaries between logical orders in the lexical meaning of the word and stimulates the emergence of logical polysemy.

Another typology of metaphors is proposed by M. Nikitin. This typology is based on the variety of the sign similarity in denotations. It is basic for transferring a name and for metaphorical reconstruction of the direct meaning. So, the linguist identifies the following types of metaphors (Nikitin, 2008):

(1) An ontological metaphor (the similarity is contained in the things themselves being similarly compared):
(a) A direct metaphor (signs have the same physical nature, for example, “bear” – (1) a clumsy animal, (2) an awkward person);

(b) A structural metaphor (the similarity is structural in nature, particularly, there is structural identity of two denotations, for example: receiving presents, receiving guests, receiving information).

(2) Synesthetic metaphor (signs of similarity are found in compared entities, but are different ontologically and in physical nature) – a linguistic metaphor that verbally reinforces intersensory transferences;

(3) Emotive-evaluative metaphor (similarity is generated not by the ontology of things, but by the mechanisms of information processing) – the metaphor is aimed to produce an expressive effect and becomes a means of emotional impact.

A. Maslennikova notes that grammar can act as a means of conveying metaphorical meaning. Therefore, the author deduces such a type of metaphor as a grammatical metaphor. The speaker transfers features from one grammatical category to the sphere of another in order to create a new additional meaning, which may no longer be grammatical (Maslennikova, 2006).

M. A. Smirnova defines living and linguistic metaphors. So, the author notes that a feature of a living metaphor is that at the moment of the generation and comprehension of the metaphor, the interaction of two denotations takes place (what is compared and the one which it is compared with). The name of the latter becomes the name of the first in the process of acquiring a metaphorical value. As for the linguistic metaphor, it is an important factor in the development of the language. According to M. Smirnova, it is the linguistic metaphor that is the basis of many linguistic processes, including the development of synonymous means, the emergence of new meanings and their nuances, the creation of polysemy, the development of emotionally expressive vocabulary. Thanks to the metaphor, ideas are verbalized thus materializing the inner world of a person (Smirnova, 2014).

In J. Lakoff and M. Johnson’s classification two types of metaphors are presented (Lakoff, 2004):

- Ontological metaphors that allow you to see events, actions, emotions, ideas, etc. as a kind of substance (the mind is an entity, the mind is a fragile thing);

- Orientational metaphors that do not define one concept in terms of another, but organize the entire system of concepts in relation to each other (happy is up, sad is down; conscious is up, unconscious is down).

According to N. Belozerova (2009), a conceptual metaphor described by J. Lakoff is a clot of information fixed in images. It can be divided into two types:

- “Basic metaphor” based on the processing of information about the world;

- Metaphor of the self (metaself), which arose in the earliest periods of human existence and is based on the assimilation of all phenomena to man, his morphology and behavior.

N. Belozerova describes another ancient type of conceptual metaphor which is a synthesis of the basic metaphor and the metaphor of the self. This synthesis is due to the idea of the inseparability of man and nature. According to N. Belozerova (2010), it was this metaphor that became the basis of various mythological representations.

With all the variety of different approaches to the definition, categorization and classification of metaphor, all authors emphasize the fact that metaphor acts as a way of categorizing reality. Metaphor is not just a linguistic means by which speech is decorated and an
image is made more understandable, but a form of thinking. In order to present concepts that are not conditioned by experience, a person uses a metaphor.

With the help of metaphor, the mechanisms of mental processes that form the basis of our subconscious are set in motion. The metaphor as the entire part of person’s life manifests itself both in language and in the manner of thinking and action. Metaphor acts as a means of expressing mental processes that are based on cultural, national and social characteristics.

2. Data and method

This article deals with semantic and structural features of the metaphor in the Russian and English languages, and their role and use in biathlon media discourse.

The research was based on scripts of video reports about the biathlon World Championships 2012-16, men, mass start, 15 km by Russian commentator Dmitry Guberniev as well as about the biathlon World Cups 2013-16, men, mass start, 15 km by English commentators Patrick Winterton and Mike Dixon. The total duration of reports is 13 hours 52 minutes (8 hours 06 minutes and 5 hours 46 minutes correspondingly). The reports are taken from the video hosting service YouTube.

The research of semantic and structural features of Russian and English metaphors in the framework of biathlon media discourse has shown the need for a step-by-step solution of the problem.

The goal of first stage was to identify the ethno-cultural parameters of the Russian-language and English-language sports commentary of international biathlon competitions.

The goal of the second stage was to analyze the features of metaphorization in the biathlon media discourse.

3. Quantitative and qualitative results

3.1 Results of frame-slot comparative analysis

Realizing the goal of the first stage, we studied the speech of commentators using frame-slot analysis as the main one, since according to V. Demyankov (1994), a frame is “a data structure that condenses large amounts of memory and is used to represent stereotypical situations”.

We found that frames are universal for the speech of sports commentators in both cultures: “Description of a sporting event”, “Representation of athletes”, “Athletes’ skills”, “Competing”, “Reference to the coach”, “Reference to an authoritative opinion”, “Audience reaction”, “Contact with the addressee”, “Commentator’s own opinion and feelings”, “Race results” (Demyankov, 1994). This result shows that sports commentary is a fairly structured text with constant components.

Along with this, we found that some universal frames differ in the compared languages by additional semantic representations in terms of quantity and/or quality.

Thus, in D. Guberniev’s speech, ethnocultural specificity is formed by representative frames in the following quantitative correlation: “Commentator’s own opinion and feelings” – 27.5%, “Representation of the athlete” – 15.8% and “Contact with the addressee” – 15.4 %. In the English comments, the rating of universal categories is presented as follows: “Competing” – 37%, “Commentator’s own opinion and feelings” – 15%, “Representation of the athlete” – 10% and “Description of a sporting event” – 10%
As for the content side of the universal frames, we can see the biggest contrast between the compared frames “Commentator’s own opinion and feelings” and “Competing”.

The frame “Commentator’s own opinion and feelings” is expressed in slots in both cultures:

“Praise, approval”,
“The desire to give advice”,
“The expression of hope, expectation”.

However, in D. Guberniev’s commentaries additional slots were further revealed, they are “Desire to explain an unsuccessful performance”, “Worrying about our athletes”, “Criticism, reproach, disapproval”. In English commentaries, the same dominant frame is represented by the slots “Desire to cheer up an unsuccessful athlete”, “Expression of confidence”, “Expression of doubt”, “Expression of regret”.

In the statements collected in the frame “Sport competition”, D. Guberniev shows the athletes’ desire to win, the intensity of the competitive struggle. In the same frame of the English commentary, the slot “Impact of failure on the race result” prevails, and the slots “Mutual assistance of opposing teams” and “Unsportsmanlike behavior”, typical for a Russian commentator, are absent.

Let us have a closer look at some examples.

In the dominant frames “Expression of the commentator’s own opinion and experiences” and “Representation of athletes”, the Russian sports commentator uses the speech of a panegyric in relation to both the athletes themselves and the teams of the countries they represent. The linguistic implementation of these parameters occurs through the use of the epithets “incredible”, “brilliant”, metaphors “cream of biathlon society”, “king of races with the general start”, hyperboles “racing genius”, ‘super-prestigious history”, “dramatic beginning”, “incredibly big lag”, “got together by the moment”. This ethnocultural parameter indicates the orientation of Russian culture to a person, and not to a result. D. Guberniev’s speech clearly demonstrates the commentator’s interest in the performance of athletes and teams, his feelings for the Russian team, the desire to praise and give advice. This mental category is also realized with the help of the emotionally colored vocabulary “bravo’, the personal pronoun “I”. The expression of the commentator’s own opinion in this case is a sign of the genre - sports commenting presupposes subjectivity of statements.

Unlike Russian one, English sports commentary is dominated by a competitive attitude. This is evidenced by the dominant ethnocultural parameter “Sport competition”, the linguistic realization of which occurs through the use of the epithets “extraordinary”, “sensational”, “fantastic”. English commentators describe competing at the track in much more detail, express their desire to cheer up an unsuccessful athlete through repetition: “And that’s really- really disappointing for Tim. But he’s got a long long way to go and plenty of opportunities will come his way.”

The ethnocultural parameter “Expression of the commentator’s own opinion and feelings” in the English sports commentary is also representative. Commentators express their own opinion using the personal pronoun “I” and the expressions “Perhaps”, “Amazing thing”, “Hope”, “It’s great to see”, “Fancy that”. As we can see even from these examples, statements are more restrained emotionally and less categorical.

In both lingua cultures, the use of professional vocabulary is an integral part of commenting. In the Russian linguistic culture, the commentator, describing the intensity of the struggle in the mass start, uses the professionalisms “shot to zero”, “best skiing technique”, “shot
himself (missed 3-4 times), “first shooting”, epithets “phenomenal shooting”, “Good race! Cool race! And educative!”, metaphors «Сегодня гнулись остальные» / “The rest were bent today”, «два промаха в индивидуалке» / “two misses in an individual”, «они просто сошли с ума после вчерашней победы в эстафете» / “they just went crazy after yesterday’s victory in the relay”, «однозначная, в одну калитку победа» / “an unambiguous one-sided victory”. English commentaries also have examples of sports terminology “be relaxed on the rifle”, “hit twenty of twenty”.

A distinctive ethnocultural feature in English linguoculture is “Commentator’s Humor”. According to Keith Fox, “English conversations are almost always filled with teasing, irony, derogatory remarks, humorous self-flagellation, ridicule, or just plain silly remarks” (Fox, 2020). In the commentaries under study, humor is aimed at emphasizing the complexity of the track: “Once round this three-kilometer track, Patrick is tiring enough. - As you said “five times” - they’re exhausted already. – That’s the feeling I’m getting from talking to some of the athletes”. This indicates the ease of speech of the English commentators, while the Russian sports commentator is more formal.

In Russian culture, the relationship between the commentator and the audience is more visible. He uses the pronoun “we”, a direct appeal to the viewer throughout the commentary, making the latter a direct observer of events:  «Гараничев идет 20-й... представьте, только 20-й!..» / “Garanichev is 20th... - can you imagine, only 20th!”; «Вспомните Ханты-Мансийск» / “Remember Khanty-Mansiysk”; «Но сейчас мы видим очень большое отставание» / “But now we see a very big gap”.

All this shows the collectivist attitude of Russian culture. In English commentary, for more lively communication with TV/radio listeners, a technique is used such as reporting with the participation of two commentators. Another distinctive feature of English commentating on a sporting event is the participation of an authoritative person in it, an interview with whom also makes the report more “lively” and exciting.

The data provided by comparing sports comments belonging to different linguistic cultures allows us to conclude that the Russian sports commentator makes an accent on the personality of the athlete, praises him, and subjectively evaluates the competition. In addition, the commentator’s speech is dominated by self-awareness at the “we” level. The English comments are based on practical results; the commentator evaluates the actions and skills of the athlete, and not his personality. This approach allows the English commentator to use humor and irony more often.

3.2 Role of metaphor in Russian and English biathlon discourses

Analysis of the language material has led us to the conclusion that the role of metaphors in Russian and English sports discourses is quite large. Sports journalists strive for emotional expressiveness in their reports. This is confirmed by the fact that in their reports they use a large number of artistic and expressive means: metaphors, metonymies, comparisons, hyperboles, personifications. But the most frequent are metaphors and hyperbole (for example, they occupy 76% in the speech of Dmitry Guberniev).

These conclusions allowed us to proceed to the realization of the second stage of our research, namely, to analyze the features of metaphorization in the biathlon media discourse. As a result of analyzing a significant body of texts that are the core of biathlon media discourse, we have identified a number of basic metaphors that allow us to turn a dry, purely informational description of an event into a story that can attract the addressee not only by its
sports component, but also by the author’s manner of presenting the event, expressing a certain assessment. The classification of basic metaphors of the studied discourse consists of 7 main metaphorical models, namely “biathlon is a war”, “team is a mechanism”, “game/competition is a way”, “game/competition is a construction”, “team is a society”, “team is an organism”, “biathlon is an art”.

In the following table there are examples to illustrate each metaphorical model.

| Metaphorical model | Russian variant | English variant |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| war                | попасть в призы to get into the prizes, выцеливать to target, похоронить to bury hopes, тактическая паутина | veteran rearguard win the season-long “war” |
| mechanism          | Эта Палка стреляет не раз в год - гораздо чаще! This Palka shoots more than once a year - much more often! (Kristine Palka is a Polish biathlete. + palka = stick + Russian proverb “Even a stick shoots once a year”) | When all cylinders are firing, she can be a dominating force |
| way                | пересечь линию финиша to cross the finish line, совершить большой скачок to take the big leap. “Наш Заичик уже давно от волка убежал вот и сегодня от Швеции” “Our Zaichik ran away from the wolf for a long time ago and now from Sweden as well” (Zaichik is a short name of Russian biathlete Olga Zaitseva + zaichik = bunny) | to cross the finishing line journey to the podium make the biggest jump put on a big push. |
| construction       | ...они и днём и ночью строят стадион в Сочи... ... they are building a stadium in Sochi day and night всё время в гуще событий | step golden with each step to bank the points |
| society          | always in the thick of things | firm favorite performance-obsessed player | brillant player |
|------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------|
|...то раствор мешают, то кирпичи кладут...|...then they mix the solution, then they put bricks...|                            |                 |
| (про тренеров сборной).| (about the national team coaches).|                            |                 |
| явный претендент| clear contender; |  | |
| подвал турнирной таблицы| basement of the standings; |  | |
| биатлонный бог| biathlon god; |  | |
| Зайка Вся Руси| Bunny of All Russia |  | |
| (about Olga Zaitseva)| |  | |
| Ленин мирового биатлона| Lenin of the world |  | |
| organism         | нервы навыпуск| nerves out; | |
| командный дух| team spirit; |  | |
| последний выстрел захромал| the last shot limped; | fade out of contention | |
| “Замри! Умри! Воскресни!” (стрельба)| “Freeze! Die! Resurrect” |  | |
| (shooting) | | | |
| art              | театр биатлона| biathlon theatre; | |
| главное блюдо| main course of the tour; | to end on a positive note, podium | |
| тура | to end on a positive note | | |
| закончить на позитивной ноте | | | |
| биатлонный этюд в исполнении Максима Чудова| ballet etude performed by Maxim Chudov. | | |

The central and most influential metaphor for sports discourse is military metaphor. The sport conflict potential explains such a wide expansion of this model into sports discourse. The verbal presentation of sports discourse key elements in military terms is due to the proximity of the scenarios of war and the biathlon race.
The metaphorical model “team is a mechanism” is effective for expressions of the utilitarian, normative and teleological evaluation of the country’s biathletes performance as one team. Sports activity can be conceptualized as a technological process. Team players are presented as parts of the mechanism.

The basic metaphor “the game/competition is the path” implements mainly a teleological evaluation, reflecting the progress of the team towards the goal. The normative time span of matches and tournaments becomes the empirical basis for the metaphor of the path.

The metaphorical “game/competition is construction” model is functional for expressions of normative and teleological evaluation of the team’s creative and tactic actions. The team itself, as well as the components of its game and tactics, can be represented in the construction. The Coach is the person who erects the building, constructs the competition, and is responsible for the final result.

The basic metaphor “team is society” is rather functional in sports discourse. A projection of institutional concepts becomes expression of the normative evaluation of events. The concept of power is one of the central ones in the social model. The most authoritative key players and the coach himself are the most powerful team members. The concept of work also plays an important role in the structure of social metaphor. The player on the field works hard, does all his best, and is engaged in getting balls. Depending on the nature of the work performed on the field, various characteristics of the players' actions are explicated. The scored points and time spent have material value.

The organism metaphor, like the military one, is universal, the use of the basic concepts of life and death in relation to events makes one perceive the founding of a club (birth), the formation of a team (growth), a non-confident performance (illness), loss (death) as something more significant and valuable than they really are. The player is considered to be part of the organism.

The use of elements of the metaphorical model “biathlon is art” brings the aesthetic evaluation of the event to the foreground. The entertainment component of sports, to some extent, comes into conflict with the agonal, conflictogenic components of sports, as well as pragmatic and utilitarian ones. The theatrical and musical metaphors are included in the structure of the metaphorical model of art, as well as literary, cinematic and dance metaphors are added. The use of the metaphor of art seems appropriate for expressing extraordinary actions on the track and evaluating the aesthetic component of the competition.

4. Conclusion

A comparative analysis of biathlon metaphors in the Russian and English-language sports reportage revealed a number of semantically and structurally similar units in English and Russian languages: team spirit — командный дух, to cross the finishing line — пересечь линию финиша, firm favorite — явный претендент, home-field advantage — преимущество своего поля, end the year on a positive note — закончить на позитивной ноте; make the biggest jump — совершить большой скачок.

At the same time, the group of unique English sports metaphors that do not have Russian equivalents is quite representative: “Her journey to the podium continued to look golden with each step”; “A medal of any color would brighten their day”; “She won the ladies 7,500 m in dominant fashion”; “Ole Einar Bjoerndalen might be the most performance-obsessed player in the history of the sport”.

The group of Russian biathlon metaphors that have no English counterparts turned out to be the most numerous and diverse in terms of spheres of metaphorical projection:
«Цветков долго выцеливает» / “Tsvetkov takes a long time to heal”; «Неужели и к нему пришел, как к Гараничеву в прошлом году, шведский стояк» / “Is it possible that a Swedish stanchion came to him, as to Garanichev last year”; «Последний выстрел захромал у Иннерхофер» / “The last Innerhofer’s shot limped”; «Не самая удачная стрельба едва не похоронила российские надежды на медаль» / “The poor shooting almost buried Russian hopes for a medal”; «Возможностей попасть впризы у украинских биатлонистов сегодня вовсе не было» / “Today, Ukrainian biathletes did not have any opportunities to get into the prizes”.

Summing up the results of the research, we came to the following conclusions:

Firstly, metaphorics (imagery) is a significant component in biathlon media discourse, since the purpose of the metaphor of this discourse is to represent a sporting event figuratively, as well as to provide feedback and reflection from listeners / readers / viewers.

Secondly, the specific character of the biathlon discourse metaphor is revealed in the fact that under the influence of extralinguistic factors, metaphorical transference can occur at almost any lexical level, i.e. phraseological unity, sports terms, jargon of fans, proper names can be metaphorized.

Thirdly, depending on the kind of sport, metaphors are distinguished and can be united by one thematic group, but these groups can vary depending on the sport.

Finally, some metaphors are very often used in the media. In recent years, these are primarily military metaphors. Other metaphors are used less frequently, most often occasionally. But there is a trend towards their more regular use in sports discourse.

The role of metaphors in sports discourse, particularly in biathlon discourse, is not limited to the journalist’s wish to avoid schematic and monotonous style. There is enormous potential to enhance the current aspects of various sports concepts hidden in each metaphor.

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