



Football Journalism and Infotainment on Youtube: An Interview with Youtubers from Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia and Spain

Renzo Morante-Renzo¹ , Ángel Torres Toukoumidis² ,
Gerardo Karbaum*³  and Miriam Carreño⁴ 

¹ Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas, Lima, Perú

² Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, Cuenca, Ecuador

³ Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas, Lima, Perú

⁴ Universidad Privada del Norte, Lima, Perú

gkarbaum@gmail.com

Abstract. This study delves into the application of journalism and infotainment in YouTube channels dedicated to football dissemination in Spanish-speaking countries such as Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, and Spain. Through an analysis of predominant journalistic genres, characteristics of infotainment, and the interplay between objectivity and subjectivity in content creation, significant insights were gleaned. The research reveals a dynamic landscape where YouTubers navigate the realms of journalism and entertainment, adapting traditional practices to new media environments. The findings underscore the evolving nature of sports journalism in the digital era, emphasizing the importance of innovative formats and interactive experiences for audiences. By qualitatively examining content produced by YouTubers, this study sheds light on how creators engage with football-related content on YouTube, highlighting the platform's role in shaping audience engagement. The study's outcomes contribute to a deeper understanding of media production in the digital age, emphasizing YouTube's prominence as a platform for sports journalism and infotainment, and its impact on the consumption of football-related content online

Keywords: Youtube, sports journalism, infotainment, digital media, soccer

1 Introduction

The problematization of this research arises from considering the growing influence of YouTube in shaping contemporary journalistic practices, particularly in the field of sports journalism. Despite the popularity and exponential growth of football infotainment on this platform, there is a scarcity of academic studies that comprehensively address how YouTubers integrate journalistic principles with entertainment strategies to

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create content that is both informative and appealing to their audience. The fusion of serious information with dramatic, humorous, or parodic presentations raises questions about the quality, objectivity, and credibility of sports information disseminated through YouTube. Furthermore, the inherent interactivity of this digital platform introduces a new paradigm in the relationship between content creators and their audiences, reshaping expectations and forms of sports information consumption.

Therefore, this study aims to explore in depth how football dissemination YouTubers in Spanish-speaking countries navigate between the imperatives of journalism and the demands of entertainment, how they adapt and renew traditional journalistic genres for the digital medium, and what are the implications of these practices for the audience's perception of the veracity and relevance of sports information. In doing so, this research not only contributes to the academic corpus on digital journalism and infotainment but also offers valuable insights for communication professionals, content creators, and media scholars on the emerging dynamics in the production and consumption of sports content in the digital era.

1.1 Informational genres: from mass media to Youtube

In this context, YouTube, recognized as the second most used search engine and the second most employed social network for news consumption, has leveraged digital convergence and developed its own language and codes based on fragmentation and hypertextuality, complementing written news with visual and auditory elements [1, 2, 3, 4, 5].

Digital convergence is also employed by digital journalism, as the production and dissemination of journalistic content occur in a multimedia and multi-platform format. It utilizes cyberspace to search, investigate, produce, and disseminate content in an environment with greater access to information and increased interaction, due to bidirectionality [6, 7]. Thus, new forms of communication emerge on social networks, especially on YouTube, involving the creation of innovative journalistic genres and formats aimed at adapting journalism to these platforms [4]. Although they stem from the same genres and styles of traditional journalism, they progressively introduce new forms of interaction and consumption, leveraging new technologies to create and distribute journalistic content innovatively [8].

Regarding journalistic genres, their classification depends on the approach and the author [4]. In Spain, the most widespread classification is proposed by Martínez Albertos [9], dividing genres into three categories: informative, interpretative, and opinion. Casasús and Núñez [10] expand this classification into four groups: informative, interpretative, argumental, and instrumental.

Meanwhile, Muñoz [11] proposes five levels: genres predominantly informative, ambiguous-mixed of information and interpretation, interpretative, ambiguous-mixed of interpretation and opinion, and opinion genres. Additionally, there are classifications focusing on specific formats; hence, Cebrián Herrerros [12] proposes a classification for audiovisual media distinguishing between expressive, referential, and dialogical genres. Journalistic genres are not rigid and unalterable formulas; they are subject to changes and adaptations over time and context. Therefore, new technologies have the

ability to alter and even renew journalistic texts, highlighting the dynamic nature of these genres [13].

Moreover, in this new digital environment, the field of sports journalism can find opportunities for innovation by leveraging bidirectional communication and reaching niche markets through new platforms [14, 15, 16]. Boyle [17] argues that sports journalism is not limited to a single format, as journalists must capture the audience's interest, implying that sports journalism combines elements of entertainment and drama.

1.2 Infotainment

Since the 1980s, a variety of studies have revealed the transformation of television information that was being combined with entertainment, which gave rise to a new genre that was called infotainment [18]. This reflects the evolution of journalism and communication, where entertainment becomes a crucial element in capturing the audience's interest and providing knowledge and analysis of current events [19, 20, 21]. According to Ortells [22], the media must understand that there are users who consume content exclusively through the web because there they can participate as protagonists through comments or interact directly with content producers. Infotainment programs are characterized by factors such as citizenship becoming the protagonist of the information [23, 24].

In infotainment, notable features include the use of close-ups or detail shots to highlight individuals' emotionality, the use of subjective shots, the presence of captions to emphasize images and testimonials, and product promotion stand out. Additionally, as a narrative technique, dramatization is emphasized to impact the audience and explore the experiences of the protagonists, turning private lives into public interest [18]. Along with humor, such as the use of memes, graphic and audiovisual humorous content. Authors like Lozano [25] emphasize the importance of subjective shots, dramatic music, image slow-motion, and post-production effects. Berrocal, Campos and Redondo [18] highlight that slow or fast camera techniques are used to alter dynamism, highlight images, or emotional impact. Regarding recording techniques, the use of handheld cameras to show naturalness is highlighted, as well as montages with visual and sound effects to provide dynamism [24].

Regarding colloquialism, Beinhauer [26] defines colloquial language as natural and spontaneous, arising from everyday life, not consciously formulated. Similarly, Arce [27] emphasizes the importance of expressions, intonations, and gestures used in colloquial language clearly conveying the sender's feelings and reflecting what the receiver is desired to perceive. In this sense, Muñoz [28] mentions that the journalist not only witnesses what they communicate but also becomes involved in the news and content, implementing his or her personality through gestures and comments introduced in the narration, generating a process of identification between the journalist and the audience.

On the other hand, Carrillo [21] mentions that, to appeal to the audience's emotions, descriptive language is combined with surprise and the use of rhetorical figures. Likewise, he points out that sensationalist language seeks to capture our attention and therefore tries to do so in the most striking and direct way possible.

Some characteristics of colloquial language, according to Mancera and Pano [29], are the use of adjectives, terms from youth slang, words taken from other languages like Anglicism, the creation of new words, the use of interrogative statements, and the abbreviation of words. Additionally, first and second-person verbs, both singular and plural, are often used to establish greater closeness with the message recipients [29, 4].

2 Methodology

This research is based on the interpretive paradigm, which involves understanding the subjective world through the analysis of perceptions, actions, behaviors, and interpretations to which individuals attribute meanings to construct their reality [30, 31, 32]. This allows understanding the studied object at a specific moment and place and then comparing it at different times, becoming a set of meanings that help understand the object of study [33].

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach since it is a more in-depth study of the opinions, perceptions, and preferences of the subjects, which includes the voices of the participants and the researcher's interpretation [33, 34]. For this purpose, a methodological design was used, studying individual cases to build a theory based on the interpretation and perception of the world that participants have [30]; according to Krauze [31], people construct reality depending on the meanings they attribute to what they say or do, and it is this way of assigning meaning that the researcher must interpret. Additionally, the analytical method was used, which consists of classifying and/or coding the various elements of a message into categories in order to appropriately bring out its meaning [34]. This research is basic, cross-sectional, non-experimental, and descriptive because it aims to describe the application of journalism and infotainment in football dissemination media in: Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, and Spain.

Data collection was obtained through the semi-structured interview technique, allowing another questions to be added during the interview to obtain the maximum amount of information from the participant to better understand their point of view [35]. The instrument used was the question questionnaire, validated by an expert, which served as an index guide where questions were raised based on the 3 stages of audiovisual production - pre-production, production and post-production - described by Baldeón [36]. The following research objectives were proposed to carry out the study:

General Objective:

To analyze the application of journalism and infotainment in YouTube channels dedicated to football dissemination in Spanish-speaking countries, such as Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, and Spain.

Specific Objectives:

- Identify the predominant journalistic genres used by football dissemination YouTubers in the selected countries.
- Analyze the characteristics of infotainment employed by YouTubers in their football-related content.

- Evaluate the relationship between objectivity and subjectivity in journalistic and entertainment content produced by YouTubers in the selected countries

For this research, a sample of football dissemination YouTubers from various Spanish-speaking countries was determined: Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, and Spain. This sample was selected based on the following criteria of Creswell [33]: having more than twenty-five thousand subscribers and maintaining consistent activity of more than six months publishing videos on the platform. Additionally, to measure the ranking within their countries, within the sports category, SocialBlade was used, a web tracking tool that tracks users' performance on YouTube [37, 38]. Likewise, the variety of formats offered in their content was considered. Based on this, the sample was constituted as represented in the following table.

Table 1. Channel list.

Channel	Country	Subscriptions	Contact medium	Interview medium
Fanodric Podcast (FP)	Peru	349 K	Direct message on Twitter	Zoom
El chileno.pe (CP)	Peru	106 K	email	Microsoft Teams
Esto es fútbol	Peru	74.4 K	Direct message on Twitter	Microsoft Teams
Diego Yudcovsky (DY)	Argentina	124 K	Email	Zoom
Nero Fútbol (NF)	Argentina	282 K	Direct message on Twitter	Microsoft Teams
Juego Balón (JB)	Mexico	473 k	Email	Zoom
Palabra de gol (PG)	Colombia	580 K	Chat for members in youtube live	Zoom
A Bote Pronto (BP)	Spain	27.5 K	Direct message on Twitter	Audio direct message on instagram
ProyectoFutbolteca (PF)	Spain	127 K	Direct message on Twitter	Audio direct message on instagram
Tricuartista (TC)	Spain	108 K	Direct message on Twitter	Audio direct message on instagram

Contacting them was a complex task due to their high visibility. A list of 36 channels was compiled for interviews; then, emails requesting interviews were sent out. When there was no response, direct messages were sent via Instagram and Twitter. On this platform, some YouTubers had the option disabled or activated only for verified users. Additionally, comments were made on videos at the time of their publication to have the option to contact; furthermore, paid messages or super chats on YouTube and bits on Twitch were sent so that the creator could see and respond to the invitation. As a

result, 10 interviews were obtained through the following contact methods: 1 via YouTube super chat, 3 via email, 1 via a live stream where only YouTube members can write, paid membership, paid system, and 5 via Instagram.

The analysis criteria were established according to the characteristics of the research categories - journalism and infotainment. The interviews were conducted from January 26th to March 18th, 2024. Due to time constraints and greater accessibility of the interviewees, 4 interviews were conducted via Zoom, 3 through Microsoft Teams, and 3 interviews via audio messages on Instagram direct messages. Then, transcription was carried out for proper coding, interpretation, and analysis, to address the research questions [39].

3 Results

3.1 Sports journalism and Youtube

The YouTubers who have studied journalism defend the idea that they engage in sports journalism because they produce journalistic content or disseminate information related to football (BT, DY, EF, PG). On the other hand, Chileno PuntoPe [@ChilenoPuntoPe] shows respect for the profession and considers that true journalism involves research and constant information gathering; Nero Fútbol [@NeroFutbol] is unsure if his content can be considered journalism; and Juego Balón [@juegobalon] acknowledges that his approach is more subjective and opinion-based.

Furthermore, Chileno PuntoPe mentions that for him, true journalism is "the one that seeks, the one that investigates, the one that perhaps doesn't go to the primary source but goes to other sources and is constantly asking, almost like a gossip, but is doing the work" (CP, personal communication, February 1, 2024). He mentions that, when faced with information, he contrasts it, analyzes it, and communicates his opinion. Likewise, Nero Fútbol points out that he has tried to inform, to communicate using sources, but he is unsure if he has reached the level of having done journalism.

In addition to this, Palabra de Gol [@PalabradeGol] mentions that at university, he was taught to provide information with context so that the audience can better understand it. Also, when faced with unconfirmed information, they created content called parallel universes where they present events in a possible future. In this way, they use the information received to create content but without confirming it to their audience, ensuring its accuracy as a channel "we take great care to be quite precise and consistent with what we say and, above all, to provide information with context because that is the ultimate goal of journalism" (PG, personal communication, February 10, 2024).

Likewise, YouTubers agree, during their pre-production process, on the verification of data with various reliable sources available to them, such as sports newspaper pages, internal sources, or direct journalistic sources. Regarding this, Chileno PuntoPe mentions that contacts are fundamental since they provide first-hand information like the representatives of the football players or their associates; likewise, he highlights that inspiring trust is important for making good contacts, such as respecting the time they give you to reveal information or not mentioning the names of the sources.

Within the journalistic genres, most content creators identify with editorial analyses (EF, DY), linked to opinion; interviews or chronicles, or investigation (NF, DY). Likewise, Palabra de Gol considers that within his content, he covers various genres such as debates, interviews, news, reality, reports, among others, stating that "It is sports journalism. On many levels and with many formats, very interchangeable" (PG, personal communication, February 10, 2024)

3.2 Infotainment on football Youtube channels

Regarding Infotainment, the majority point out that their content is mostly entertainment with a bit of informative content. Additionally, Juego Balón mentions that by entertaining, he is informing, although he considers his content more entertaining. "Maybe if I'm talking to you about how a certain team dresses in a certain way, well, I'm telling you in an entertaining way so you find out, but in the end, I'm informing you" (JB, personal communication, February 5, 2024). Similarly, Nero Fútbol mentions that his content seeks a balance between seriousness and informality, with the goal of educating about football, while Tricuartista [@tricuartista] explains the importance of maintaining a balance that can attract the viewer without lying to them.

Esto es Fútbol [@focanepa] mentions that football is entertainment because it is a sport that people consume for entertainment, and informing about it "is a way of entertaining, different, because sometimes one can have entertainment like jokes or humor and entertainment is much broader" (EF, personal communication, March 18, 2024). In this regard, Palabra de Gol discusses what entertainment means.

"What happens is that entertainment is misinterpreted. It is believed that if someone is entertained while watching something, then immediately it is because they are wasting their time... The fact that something is entertaining does not necessarily mean that it is empty... Who said that information has to be boring? Nobody" (PG, personal communication, February 10, 2024).

Regarding objectivity and subjectivity, there is a debate among content creators. Those who come from journalism studies (BT, EF) point out that they try to be as objective as possible. However, Esto es Fútbol comments that there is a minimum of subjectivity linked to each person's tastes or preferences, adding that you cannot be 100% objective, but there is a correct degree that appeals to your audience. While others (JB, CP) acknowledge that their opinion is inherently linked to their personal experience and context.

"There will always be a degree of subjectivity, it is inevitable because we are people, so no matter how objective you want to be, there will always be some subjectivity. Why? because you have experience, because you have a life context, because you come from a different part, perhaps, from your listener" (CP, personal communication, February 1, 2024).

For Diego Yudcovsky, objectivity does not exist, since opinion is subjective as it is biased by what we think, feel, or want to happen. Moreover, he emphasizes that opinion is the only differential that content creators have on the internet. "The only thing that will not exist on Google, beyond whether I published it or not, is what I feel inside my head" (DY, personal communication, March 12, 2024). Similarly, Palabra de Gol

believes that frankness and closeness to the audience are more important than objectivity. In addition, Chileno PuntoPe emphasizes that people want naturalness, to feel like they are with a friend.

"If you become too rigid, too journalistic, people get bored and change you. For that, I listen the radio, it has better information and works with renowned people giving you the information; there has to be a balance, but you have to try to be as colloquial as possible. If I started speaking technical language all the time, nobody would watch me. I have to speak to people in the language they understand, or they won't understand me" (CP, personal communication, February 1, 2024).

Additionally, some YouTubers highlight that they seek to connect with the audience through emotion: telling stories (PF), sports stories (EF), or opinions (PG, DY) that evoke emotion. Juego Balón considers that the success of creating content is to generate content that evokes some emotion in the viewer to connect. In this sense, Diego Yudcovsky points out that he lives off emotion, so he seeks to generate emotions, through sympathy or disagreement, but provoking an emotional reaction in the audience, something he considers fundamental to maintaining the audience's interest.

Furthermore, Palabra de Gol comments that trying to please everyone is impossible and ends up disappointing oneself; besides, he does not try to accommodate to be liked, but rather considers it more important that they believe him. Thus, "the information one gives obviously has one's perspective, but it is still information where, in the long run, people take a position for or against" (PG, personal communication, February 10, 2024). In addition, Fanodric [@FANODRICPodcast] comments that "the key to the channel's success is that people find opinions they can disagree with or agree with" (FP, personal communication, January 29, 2024).

On the other hand, creators also consider the tone and style of their content is important for connecting with the audience. While *Esto es Fútbol* prefers to maintain a journalistic and professional tone in his sports narrations, which is valued by his audience, preferring it to television, others like *Nero Fútbol* seek to tell stories in a more approachable and accessible way.

"I try to do it like someone who tells you a story, like someone who wants to open up to you and tell you, look, this is what happened, this is why it happened, these were its consequences, as a history teacher would do" (NF, personal communication, March 13, 2023).

Fanodric, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of being genuine and narrating his videos as if he were talking to friends. Additionally, Palabra de Gol highlights the importance of using different levels of intonation to convey sarcasm, irony, and other information effectively to his audience.

Chileno PuntoPe points out that he must implement entertainment to gain views, through editing or comments that make people laugh. "People want you to entertain them while you're telling them something, analyzing something, entertaining them with editing, with some funny cuts, with some comments that can even be silly, but that people will laugh at" (CP, personal communication, February 1, 2024). Similarly, Juego Balón mentions that editing is his main tool for entertaining. According to his content, it's the way he captures his audience's attention. He comments:

"It's the point that gives me the ability to entertain. It's not the same as if I were to record right now in this shot and say everything and upload it just like that... to do this, and close-ups and zoom-outs, and suddenly I put the image of what I'm talking about and move it and add an effect" (JB, personal communication, February 5, 2024).

In this regard, Proyecto Futbolteca [@ProyectoFutbolteca] mentions that to maintain the viewer's attention "you have to provide information in a fun way, with music, changes in voice, tones, put entertaining images, etc., so the viewer stays" (PF, personal communication, January 26, 2024).

Additionally, A Bote Pronto [@Abotepronto_oficial] mentions that "our main objective is always for the video to be entertaining because, if not, people won't watch it or they'll just read a newspaper article and so on" (BP, personal communication, February 6, 2024). Furthermore, they point out that in their scripts, they implement curiosities or funny stories about a football player or a club, while maintaining some objectivity, except in videos where they give their opinion. Additionally, Esto es Fútbol mentions that they implement entertainment through graphics such as images, videos, statistics, line-ups, heat maps, which they use as tools to carry out their own analysis and publish it in a video.

4 Discussion and conclusions

Infotainment is used on all the channels studied, as its creators claim that their content aims to entertain the audience, albeit in different ways, because some provide more direct information while others combine various elements such as editing to make it more entertaining, aligning with what Grabe [19], Ferré [20], Carrillo [21], and Berrocal [18] point out. Additionally, they consider it important to evoke emotions in the audience, to generate sensations in the viewer by observing the channel, which is related to what Carrillo [21] mentions, as they appeal to the audience's emotions to connect with them.

On the other hand, YouTubers who present journalism studies mention that their content leans towards objectivity, emphasizing that complete objectivity does not exist, but the closer their content gets to it, the more professional it becomes. On the other hand, there are those who produce more entertainment-oriented content that is considered purely subjective. Thus, content creators relate informative content to objectivity and entertainment to subjectivity. They also mention that they speak in a colloquial manner so that the audience can understand them and not get bored; pointing out that media outlets can inform in the same way and what sets them apart is the naturalness they maintain, like a friend having a conversation with them or a teacher teaching them, which manages to keep their attention [19, 20, 21]. Since, as Beinhauer [26] mentions, colloquial language is defined as natural and spontaneous, arising from everyday life.

Within the category of journalism and journalistic genres, those who have studied journalism consider themselves sports journalists; while some, out of professional consideration, prefer not to be called that. However, they perform tasks such as contrasting sources, interpreting, and analyzing information to communicate it in their videos,

actions that align with the proposal that sports journalism can find opportunities for innovation in this new digital environment [14, 15, 16]; furthermore, as Boyle [17] indicates, these innovations are not limited to a single format, but the content of these YouTubers is presented in videos published on different platforms and in live streams, being multimedia and multi-platform [6].

Regarding journalistic genres, most of them apply opinion, as defined by Martínez Albertos [9]; however, as López [13] points out, these genres present variations depending on the style of each channel and platform. Likewise, there is a case in which a YouTuber describes that he uses different formats but without ceasing to be sports journalism.

This research was not without limitations, including the sample's composition and subsequent contact for interviews. The results are relevant as they highlight the perception of these YouTubers about their media work; however, due to the qualitative approach applied, they are not generalizable to all football channels on YouTube or other platforms. Therefore, future researchers are recommended to follow these lines of investigation to determine how journalism and infotainment continue to evolve in these digital media in the face of emerging new technologies that will influence the creation of these contents, for this purpose, it is proposed to resort to techniques such as content analysis of the products generated in this type of channels or to apply qualitative or mixed approach studies.

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