

## Translation Phenomena at The Tour de France: Sports Commentaries or Consecutive/Simultaneous Interpreting?

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### ABSTRACT

The Tour de France is one of most important sports events in the world, and it has always had a significant impact on TV audiences in Spain. Every year, the Spanish public TV channel, RTVE (Radio Televisión Española), broadcasts this cycling competition. Its commentators are sports journalist Carlos de Andrés and former cyclist Pedro Delgado. In the post-stage interviews, de Andrés transposes the questions made to the cyclists, as well as their answers, into Spanish, often by using a sort of consecutive interpreting mode and, sometimes, even a simultaneous one.

In this article, the main elements conforming this kind of interpretative act will be analysed from a qualitative and functional perspective. To that end, a corpus consisting of interpretative acts by de Andrés will be used. The data will reveal that, in these consecutive, simultaneous or hybrid interpretative acts, the information given is never translated in full; the result is often an extended or selective summary of what has been said, and is accompanied by sports commentaries.

### KEYWORDS

Tour de France, post-stage interviews, sports commentators, non-professional media interpreters, consecutive/simultaneous/media interpretation

### 1. Introduction: the Tour de France and its broadcasting in Spain

The Tour de France is one of most important sports events in the world. In 2024, according to the Tour de France official web (2024), it was broadcast in 190 countries, it had more than 1 billion hours viewed, and it was covered by 1,800 accredited journalists from almost 500 different media. Since its origins in 1903, the Tour has always had a significant impact on audiences in Spain too. Every year, the Spanish national public television and radio broadcaster, RTVE (Radio Televisión Española)<sup>i</sup>, broadcasts every three-to-four-hour stage of this cycling competition. During the Tour de France, two Spanish sports commentators, sports journalist Carlos de Andrés<sup>ii</sup> and ex-cyclist and 1988 Tour de France winner Pedro —Perico— Delgado<sup>iii</sup> offer their descriptive commentary live from RTVE's studio in Madrid, not from within the Tour itself.

At the end of each stage, the cyclists who have played a significant role in the stage are interviewed by journalists after the race. These journalists are not only accredited to perform these interviews, but they also very often are affiliated to French broadcast companies, are French themselves, or both. The post-stage interviews are therefore mainly held in French, but also in Italian, Spanish or English and they are typically broadcast by RTVE in their entirety. During these interviews broadcast to Spanish audiences, de Andrés acts as a “non-professional media interpreter”<sup>iv</sup> (Jiménez Serrano, 2011). He typically transposes the questions presented to the winner of the stage, as well as their answers. This transposition mimics interpreting, sometimes consecutive and even simultaneous interpreting, in which the information given is transposed “almost” in full but hardly ever fully. Based on this condensation of information, it is evident that this type of media interpreting can be considered as a form of audiovisual translation (Kalinin, 2018, p. 57). Other terms, like “transediting” (Schäffner, 2012) could also be used to describe this complex process of transferring information within the context of mass media.

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The work of both professional and non-professional interpreters in sports media has been analysed by different researchers, where football has been the most studied sport (Mullock, 2012; Sandrelli, 2012a, 2012b, 2015; Maselli, 2013; Losa, 2013; Akbulut & Saba, 2023; Anayawuike, 2023). Other sports, like MotoGP, Superbike and Formula One races (Ghignoli & Torres Díaz, 2015; Jiménez Serrano, 2011) and baseball (Itaya, 2021) have also been taken into consideration. However, despite the popularity and the multilingual nature of the cycling world, cycling, and the Tour de France in particular, has not received much attention.

Cycling teams are formed by cyclists from different nationalities, where code-switching and multilingualism (French, Spanish or Italian are considered as the “cycling’s official languages”) and the use of English as a *lingua franca* are the most common ways of communication among people belonging to the cycling community. This also happens when any of the Grand Tours (Tour de France, Giro d’Italia and La Vuelta a España) takes place. During these widely broadcast events, international media play an important role, and, consequently, various forms of interpreting.

This paper will analyse and try to pinpoint the main characteristics of this unique kind of interpretative act. As it aims to explore the nuances between TV sports commentaries and sports media interpreting in the context of the Tour de France, this study outlines a dual focus. After every one of the 21 stages of the Tour de France, there are post-stages interviews, typically with the winner of the stage and the riders wearing the different classification leader jerseys. RTVE often broadcasts these post-stage interviews. It must be noted that, sometimes, RTVE does not broadcast the original interview in the source language, but it does include Carlos de Andrés’ interpreting into Spanish.

Although cycling competition has always been an example of multilingualism in sports (Ringbom, 2012; Losa, 2013; Sandrelli, 2015), English has grown to become the main *lingua franca* used in the Tour de France (Inkaew, 2018 and Wilton, 2019, 2020) in the last few years. This study will make use of a corpus consisting of the Spanish interpreting of these interviews originally in English. This type of interpreting is provided by Carlos de Andrés during the 2024 Tour de France. Ten post-stage interviews conducted in English with the cyclists and media interpreted on RTVE will be analysed. It must be pointed out that de Andrés is the only one performing as a non-professional media interpreter. He is sometimes assisted by his colleague Perico Delgado, and their complementarity plays a big role in the interpretative acts. However, Delgado never acts as an interpreter himself.

## 2. Media interpreting and sports commentators

The conceptual framework used to set the stage will be that of media interpreting, namely, the media interpreting carried out within the sports context. Since interpretative acts in sports are guided by intentionality, a concrete purpose, in sports communication, the application of skopos theory (Vermeer, 1978) and related functionalist approaches (Reiß, 1971; Nord, 1997) is particularly relevant, as these frameworks emphasise that the primary goal of translation is to fulfill specific communicative functions aligned with audience needs and context. Gile (2009) also sees that interpretation relies heavily on the purpose-driven nature of communication, where the translator’s role is to ensure the message is tailored to the spectators’

expectations, which is especially applicable to the dynamic environment of live sports events.

To understand the specific nature of media interpreting within sports, it is essential to consider how interpreters like Carlos de Andrés operate within the media environment. de Andrés carries out his interpretative acts within a media context (TV), making him a recognised example of a *TV interpreter*, *media interpreter* or *broadcast interpreter*, terms that are used “to describe an important field of specialisation that is increasingly gaining relevance within Interpreting Studies” (Jiménez Serrano, 2011, p. 115). This focus on media interpreting as a distinct form of audiovisual translation underscores its practical applications in live broadcasting, as Kalinin (2018) highlights its specific techniques and challenges in the context of live TV and radio coverage.

Media interpreting can be related to other types of interpreting, like conference interpreting (Kurz, 2002). However, there are some differences, which have been studied by authors like Baker (1988), Mayer (1993), Darwish (2006) or Pignataro (2011), among others. Additionally, Jiménez Serrano (2011, p.117) points out the “additional difficulties, constraints and challenges” that take place while somebody is interpreting for the media and which can be especially stressful. Primarily media interpreters work in front of a (potentially) large, undifferentiated audience from which there is no direct interaction nor any connection other than a camera lens, something that does not normally happen in conference interpreting. Jiménez Serrano also points out the technical constraints present in media settings, such as coordination when revoicing, matching speech with image or reduced decalage, all of which affects the interpreter’s performance (Jiménez Serrano, 2011, p. 118). Pignataro (2011, p. 81) and Falbo (2011) emphasise on the fact that media interpreting is a multi-faceted activity. Consequently, Pöchhacker (2011, p. 30) considers media interpreters as “premier-league interpreters”. Within this media interpreting, particularly within the sports context, there must be an “awareness of the importance of the language issue on the part of the media” (Sandrelli (2015, p. 89). By “language issue”, Sandrelli makes reference to the communication problems resulting from the multilingualism inherent in the sports industry. As a result, sports media interpreters often interact with athletes and other sports professionals from different countries and linguistic backgrounds, which introduces the presence of more than one language and potentially a rich variety of code switching or accents too. Depending on the communicative situation they find themselves in, most sports media interpreters oscillate between “consecutive, simultaneous, liaison or whispered interpretation” (Ghignoli & Torres Díaz, 2015, p. 200). This flexibility allows them to adapt to the demands of live sports events and the varying contexts in which communication takes place.

Moreover, they normally have to work in front of a TV camera, in different locations, which adds to the complexity of their role. As Akbulut & Saba (2023, p. 175) state, they can do their job “at press conferences, sports clinics, on the field or in the race”; they can be positioned next to the athlete or operate from a television studio, which means their working conditions require a high degree of ability in response rapidly changing circumstances (see also Laine, 1985, p. 212). As they constantly shift between different environments and interpretation modes, this adaptability necessitates not only technical skill but also the ability to remain flexible and composed under pressure. With its tendency to condense content and its use of the audiovisual mode, media interpreting is closely related to and can be considered as audiovisual translation

(Gambier, 2009). It can even be linked to other modes of translation, like transediting, which consists of translating but also editing source material in order to meet the specific needs and expectations of the target audience. Translators then often modify, restructure, condense, and rewrite source texts to better align with those needs. Rather than merely transferring language, the goal is to reconstruct the original intent in a way that resonates more effectively within the target language and culture —a practice especially common in areas such as journalism and (sports) news reporting.

Akbulut & Saba (2023, p. 175) consider media interpreting as “a profession that requires care and must be done elaborately by the experts”. Existing research, like the one conducted by Straniero Sergio (2003), examines the performance carried out by professional media interpreters. However, in many cases, including in this study, sports media interpreting is often performed by non-professional interpreters —such as sports commentators, television presenters, or even former athletes and coaches— who speak the target language and have experience as communicators (Mullock, 2012). This is also the case of Carlos de Andrés, who has never been trained as a professional interpreter, but yet, can be considered as “expert” in the area. Ghignoli & Torres Díaz (2015, p. 194) refer to these non-professional interpreters by using the term “natural translators”, introduced by Harris in 1978. These natural translators are individuals who are proficient in both source and target language(s), and whose primary “skopos” is to facilitate communication. In addition to this, they are able to handle a specific field of specialisation and its terminology. As a result, despite being non-professional and non-trained interpreters and, even on some occasions, improvised interpreters, their interpreting performance is perceived to be functionally correct.

In their study, Ghignoli & Torres Díaz (2015) analyse the interpretations carried out by presenters of motor races on Spanish public and private television. To do this, they considered three elements: interpreting mode, content of the message (including aspects such as accuracy and completeness, as well as omissions and additions) and formal characteristics of message delivery. Echoing a functional approach, their main objective is “to assess the effectiveness in which the presenters communicated the message to the audience, which interpreting mode they had used, and which was the location from where they were interpreting” (2015, p. 201). The authors (2015, pp. 201-204) demonstrate that the chosen interpreting mode was predominantly consecutive, without note taking. Additionally, the interpreting typically took place at the racetrack in the country where the race was held, which could be virtually anywhere in the world. This meant that the interpreters had to navigate a variety of accents and linguistic variations specific to each locality. They also faced challenging working conditions, such as background noise and other location-specific factors, which added to the complexity of their role. The information presented by these interpreters was often summarised, therefore not complete and often without following the order of the original message. Moreover, they tended to add extra information, including personal opinion. Still, the information provided through the reported speech was deemed suitable to the purpose, despite possible grammatical and lexical mistakes. Also, the information was delivered in a very positive tone, tinged with the enthusiasm that the interpreters have about the sport, highlighting both a professional and personal commitment. Ultimately, the presenters’ seasoned communication skills reinforced the perception that, despite the challenges and imperfections, the interpretation effectively

conveyed the excitement and essential information of the race, fulfilling its communicative purpose.

The growing role of English as a global lingua franca is clearly visible in international sporting events, including major cycling races such as the Tour de France. Historically, the Tour was dominated by riders from France, Belgium, Spain, and Italy —nations traditionally linked with strong performances in the event (Amstrong, 2023). As a result, communication among competitors usually occurred in at least two of these languages. In recent years, however, the profile of top contenders has become increasingly international, with cyclists from countries such as the UK, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, Ireland, Colombia, the USA, Australia, and Slovenia regularly finishing among the leaders (Amstrong, 2023). This rise in national diversity has played a significant role in establishing English as the de facto common language of the race.

Outside of cycling, English is broadly accepted as the global language of sport. Đorić (2020) notes that the multicultural environment of international competitions, along with the global network of sports professionals, has driven the need for a shared language that crosses national boundaries. The dominance of English in the sports domain is undeniable and is also reflected in how sports-related terminology is adopted across different languages (Budincic, 2014). Consequently, English has become the go-to language in media interviews with athletes, especially when they involve speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. In such interviews, both journalists and athletes are often required to navigate a specialised and internationally understood form of English (Inkaew, 2018; Wilton, 2019, 2020).

### **3. The corpus: transcripts of post-stage interviews interpretations from English into Spanish in the Tour de France 2024**

The aim of this study is to analyse the defining elements of the interpretative acts carried out by journalist Carlos de Andrés in the post-stage interviews of the Tour de France 2024.

The corpus has been compiled according to the overall criteria: Ten post-stage interviews and post-final stage interviews done *in situ* in English but broadcast and media interpreted by RTVE.

12 out of the 21 post-stage interviews to with the stage winner were broadcast by RTVE, and 10 out of 12 were held in English. Therefore, RTVE broadcast 57.1% of the post-stage interviews with the stage winner, and 47.6% of the interviews broadcast by RTVE were held in English.

Transcription of selected interviews has been carried out manually and by following the verbatim transcription method, i.e., every single word from the audio file has been captured in text, exactly the same way those words were originally spoken. As a consequence, and in line with Carlson (2010), in the present verbatim transcription verbal elements such as speakers' false starts, filler words and repetitive phrases have been included.

Date	Stage	Stage-winner	Nationality / background
07/01/2024	Stage 3 Plaisance>Turin	Biniam Girmay	Eritrean
07/02/2024	Stage 4 Pinerolo>Valloine	Tadej Pogačar	Slovenian
07/03/2024	Stage 5 Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne>Saint-Vulbas	Mark Cavendish	British
07/04/2024	Stage 6 Macon>Dijon	Dylan Groenwegen	Dutch
07/10/2024	Stage 11 Évaux-les-bains>Le Lioran	Jonas Vingegaard	Danish
07/11/2024	Stage 12 Aurillac>Villeneuve-sur-Lot	Biniam Girmay	Eritrean
07/16/2024	Stage 16 Gruissan>Nîmes	Jasper Philipsen	Belgian
07/18/2024	Stage 18 Gap>Barcelonnette	Victor Campenaerts	Belgian
07/19/2024	Stage 19 Embrun>Isola 2000	Tadej Pogačar	Slovenian
07/21/2024	Stage 21 Monaco>Nice	Tadej Pogačar	Slovenian

Table 1. Post-stage and post-race interviews making up the corpus

The interpreting mode is determined first. Ghignoli & Díaz Torres (2015, p. 202) make a distinction between consecutive, simultaneous and hybrid interpreting. Along with the mode, the location from which the interpretive act is undertaken is determined. Further considerations will be kept in mind, like the time or duration of the respective acts and if note taking is involved<sup>v</sup>. Concerning the location where these interpretations take place, it must be remembered that Ghignoli & Torres Díaz (2015, pp. 195-196) differentiate two types of television interpreting: in the first one, viewers can see and hear the interpretations that take place in or outside the TV studio; in the second one, viewers only hear, but do not see, the interpreters. In this case, we are dealing with the second type, for Carlos de Andrés interprets from the TV studio, and viewers hardly ever see him. Instead, post-stage footage (cyclists after the stage is finished, the public attending the finish line, landscapes, etc.) are broadcast. Only at the end of his interpretative performance can he be, from time to time, captured by the cameras in the TV studios, albeit briefly.

The second category is related to the content of the message in these interpretative acts, both analysed from a qualitative and a functional point of view. Accuracy (where the presence of specialised terminology is important), completeness (where the presence of linguistic amplifications<sup>vi</sup> and explicitations —Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002, p. 511— is also important), insertion of commentaries and or extra information, as well

as the intervention of other commentators, like *Perico Delgado* in this case, will be examined.

The third analytical category concerns the formal characteristics of the message delivery. It will be noted whether reported speech is used, or if Carlos de Andrés tends to rely on fillers, repetitions, or stuttering.

No back translation into English is used, because what is said in Spanish appears in the explanation of every example.

#### 4. Analysis of the corpus and results

##### 4.1. The interpreting mode

In the field of sports media interpreting, the consecutive mode is the most commonly used. However, it does not mean that other modes, like simultaneous (and whispered interpreting as a subcategory of it) or liaison do not take place in this context. In this Tour de France corpus, it has been observed that the consecutive and simultaneous modes coexist<sup>vii</sup>, to the extent that the two modes can be combined in one hybrid interpretative act, and that no liaison or whispered modes occurred.

As can be seen in Table 2, half of the interpreting acts (5 out of 10, that is, 5 minutes and 6 seconds out of a total of 17 minutes and 3 seconds) were performed by Carlos de Andrés following the consecutive mode. In these, de Andrés usually waited until the interview was finished and then delivered his interpretation. It must be noted that, when the consecutive mode was used, all the interpreting acts were shorter, lasting an average of 1 minute and half, in comparison with the real interviews, whose length could vary from 2 to 4 minutes. Moreover, de Andrés' consecutive interpretation usually condenses, not only the interpretation itself (interviewer's questions and interviewee's answers), but also the commentary. This duality can be compared with the original interview's dual mode (interviewer and athlete).

In only one of the interviews (stage 11), the sports commentator and journalist opted for the simultaneous mode, leaving a decalage of a few seconds between the words of the cyclist and his own words. In this interview, only the answers given by Vingegaard were interpreted. The questions asked by the official French journalist *in situ* were not interpreted.

The four remaining interpretative acts formed hybrid acts, combining consecutive and simultaneous modes. In the interview from stage 3, de Andrés started interpreting simultaneously, but, after a while, he stayed quiet and switched to the consecutive mode. It must be noted that it is in the consecutive mode where de Andrés includes more commentary.

Stage	Interpreting mode	Duration of the interview	Duration of the interpretation
Stage 3 Plaisance>Turin 07/01/2024	Consecutive/ simultaneous	2 minutes and 19 seconds	2 minutes and 3 seconds
Stage 4 Pinerolo>Valloine 07/02/2024	Consecutive	2 minutes and 16 seconds	1 minute and 20 seconds
Stage 5 Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne>Saint-Vulbas 07/03/2024	Consecutive/ simultaneous	3 minutes and 30 seconds	2 minutes and 16 seconds
Stage 6 Macon>Dijon 07/04/2024	Consecutive	1 minute and 58 seconds	1 minute and 2 seconds
Stage 11 Évaux-les-bains>Le Lioran 07/10/2024	Simultaneous	2 minutes and 26 seconds	2 minutes and 46 seconds
Stage 12 Aurillac>Villeneuve-sur-Lot 07/11/2024	Consecutive/ simultaneous	3 minutes and 13 seconds	1 minute and 32 seconds
Stage 16 Gruissan>Nîmes 07/16/2024	Consecutive	RTVE did not broadcast the original interview, only Carlos de Andrés' interpretation.	1 minute and 22 seconds
Stage 18 Gap>Barcelonnette 07/18/2024	Consecutive/ simultaneous	4 minutes and 30 seconds	1 minute and 21 seconds
Stage 19 Embrun>Isola 2000 07/19/2024	Consecutive	3 minutes and 29 seconds	1 minute and 35 seconds
Stage 21 Monaco>Nice 07/21/2024	Consecutive	4 minutes and 6 seconds	1 minute and 45 seconds

Table 2. Duration of interviews and their interpretations

Similarly, but in reverse order, after stage 5 de Andrés interpreted the stage winner consecutively. Then, in the middle of this interview with Cavendish, he switched to the simultaneous mode. The reasons for these changes of mode can be manifold and motivated by the accents of the two interviewees<sup>viii</sup> and even the content of what they said, where emotional outbursts were a recurring feature. In stage 5, we found a very emotional and overwhelmed Cavendish, who produced an incoherent message. While interpreting during the Tour de France, de Andrés does not seem to have major problems with the different accents (French, Slovenian or Danish, among others). However, in these two stages, a certain struggle with more notable English accents can be observed, which could explain the switch in interpreting mode in the course of

the interpretative act. In stages 12 and 18, de Andrés interpreted the first question simultaneously but then paused until the interview was over before continuing in consecutive mode.

As said, the duration of all the interpretative acts following the consecutive mode was shorter than the original interviews. Something similar was witnessed in the cases of hybrid acts, where the duration oscillated between one minute and half or two minutes, while the original interviews varied from two to four minutes. This can be explained by the fact that, as seen in the following examples, Carlos de Andrés often summarises and condenses the content of both questions and answers. A possible reason for why he devotes only a couple of minutes to deliver this information could be that the duration of the RTVE interview's broadcasting may have been previously established. It must be mentioned that the TV cameras show Carlos de Andrés taking notes almost every time the consecutive mode is involved. Consequently, the journalist can be seen consulting his notes while he is talking to the camera, toward the end of his interpretation.

In the case of the only simultaneous interpretation, its duration was practically the same as its original (around two minutes and a half), with a few extra seconds because of the decalage.

#### 4.2. Content: is it all said? And how is it said?

In this section, accuracy and completeness will be discussed. In general terms, what is said at the post-stage interview is also mentioned in the subsequent interpretative act, meaning that all the topics are well transposed, although de Andrés' interventions can contain omissions, additions and small content changes. However, minor misunderstandings also happened in the interview, as can be seen in the following examples (1 and 2).

Girmay: Yeah, first of all, I would say, thanks, God, for everything, for give [sic] me all the strength, support, and...yeah... [he gets emotional].

Carlos de Andrés: Se ha emocionado, ¿eh? La verdad es que ha agradecido primero a los chicos, decía, a los compañeros.

##### Example 1. (from stage 3)

De Andrés mentions that the winner has gotten emotional and, instead of saying that he has thanked God, he says that he has thanked the “guys”, his colleagues. This misunderstanding is corrected in the next interpretation where this cyclist, Girmay, is interviewed again. On these occasions, de Andrés, knowing that Girmay is quite religious, correctly interprets the mention to God.

Girmay: Yeah, first of all, I would say thanks, God, for giving me a lot of strength and a lot of power...

Carlos de Andrés: Bueno ha explicado, ¿no?, en las preguntas que, gracias a Dios, ¿no?, decía él, por la fuerza que está teniendo...

##### Example 2. (from stage 11)

It has been observed that any time emotion is present in the original interview, the interpretation can contain misunderstandings and semantical discrepancies. This does not mean that the act delivered by de Andrés is completely incoherent. In fact, the journalist makes a constant effort to maintain coherence, as in the next example (3):

Cavendish [very emotional]: You see what that means, you see what it means, like, okay, it doesn't mean where they're going to be top in the UCI rankings or anything, but the Tour de France is bigger than cycling, isn't it? You know what I show this race, you know what Vino [Vinokurov] shows this race...

Carlos de Andrés: Dice que al final no importa en qué posición del ranking estás, que el Tour de Francia tiene algo diferente, ¿no?

#### Example 3 (from stage 5)

This interview is one of the hardest to interpret, precisely, because the stage winner, Mark Cavendish, had just set a new record in Tour de France: he had just become the cyclist with most stage victories in the history of the Tour de France. That is the reason why, in the interview, overwhelmed with joy, Cavendish is incapable of maintaining a coherent line of discourse. Yet, de Andrés provides an interpretation which makes sense, albeit at the cost of not being completely true to Cavendish' words. In terms of completeness, it can be said that de Andrés typically provides a summary of what has been said during consecutive interpretation, and this summary often includes all the relevant information. It is important to note that much of the cyclists' speech consists of repeated expressions of gratitude and happiness, which can be easily summarised.

However, information related to cycling's technical and specialised terminology is always interpreted completely and in a very accurate way, something that proves the commentator's level of expertise on the field, as shown in the following examples (4 and 5):

Journalist: But last year, when you broke your shoulder on this, on this Tour de France...

Carlos de Andrés: Le recuerdan que el año pasado se rompió la clavícula...

#### Example 4. (from stage 5)

While the journalist uses a general term, like "shoulder", Carlos de Andrés precises that it was the "clavicle" (collarbone) that Cavendish broke in the previous Tour de France. Another specification can be found in the following example:

Girmay: Yeah, it was absolutely chaotic, especially when the crash happened. I was so scared, if you know, because it's so fast there and, then, a lot of corners, so I just focused to be safe, more safe, and the last six hundred meter [sic] suddenly I find [sic] Mike and then, yeah, he did a super good job.

Carlos de Andrés: Y ha querido explicar también que ha sido muy caótico el final. Después de la caída, dice que iban a mucha velocidad en bajada y que en los últimos 600 metros se ha encontrado con Mike, con Teunissen, su compañero, que le ha llevado hacia adelante y por eso ha podido encontrar una buena colocación.

#### Example 5. (from stage 12)



De Andrés omits the information related to the cyclist's feelings ("I was so scared", "I just focused to be safe, more safe"), but he specifies that a) when they were fast, it was *en bajada* ('while going downhill'); b) when he found Mike, it was *Mike, con Teunissen, su compañero* ('Mike, Mike Teunissen, his team-mate'), and c) when Mike "did a super good job", it was that *le ha llevado hacia delante y por eso ha podido encontrar una buena colocación* ('he took him to the front line and that is why he could find a good position').

In addition to the linguistic amplifications and explicitations employed by Carlos de Andrés to ensure accuracy and a degree of completeness in his interpretations, it is important to note that he often includes personal comments, sports commentary and additional information. This approach helps de Andrés create a connection between what has been said and the footage that is broadcast, as illustrated in the following examples (6, 7, and 8):

Vingegaard: Eh..yeah...it's, of course, very emotional for me, yeah... sorry... coming back from the crash, yeah..[he starts crying] not, yeah..Sorry...

Carlos de Andrés: Dice que de donde viene, *fíjate, se emociona y todo de la caída que sufrió.*

**Example 6. (from stage 11)**

In example (6), Carlos de Andrés sees Vingegaard crying in front of the camera, so he adds a comment saying "look at it, he is getting all emotional". The same happens in the following example (7), where Pogačar interrupts the post-stage interview to congratulate the stage winner, a feat the commentator also refers to in his commentary.

Carlos de Andrés: Dice que ha tenido caídas en momentos graves o en momentos importantes de la temporada... *Vemos repetido ahí la felicitación de Pogačar... y que en cambio este año todo ha ido bien, ¿no?*

**Example 7. (from stage 12)**

In this case, Carlos de Andrés adds in the middle of his interpretation: "we can see here again how Pogačar congratulates him". In all these cases, the commentaries by Carlos de Andrés are introduced by some verbs of perception (like "to see") which lead the audience to the images that are being broadcast:

Carlos de Andrés: Decía que para él era esta etapa (*mientras vemos ahí la llegada de Bernal*) la etapa reina...[...] dice que han dudado porque han visto que por delante también estaban rodando muy rápido los hombres de la fuga y que, como ellos querían la etapa, pues se han puesto a tirar un poquito más duro, si cabe, por detrás (*ahí le vemos, de nuevo, con su novia*).

**Example 8. (from stage 19)**

In example 8, the two commentaries are introduced by the verb 'to see'. In the first one, Carlos de Andrés says: "in the meantime, here we see Bernal's arriving". In the second, he says: "we see him again, with his girlfriend".

Regarding the extra information provided by the commentator, most of the times, this has to do with the race or even with some personal data about the cyclists, as it can be seen in example 9, where de Andrés, after Vingegaard has thanked his family, adds

that Vingegaard's wife is currently pregnant and that "she will become a mother, approximately, in September".

Vingegaard: Yeah, I mean, I'm just happy to be here. Yeah, it means so much to win a stage...specially, to win it for my family...yeah, they were there supporting me the whole time.

Carlos de Andrés: Que ya estaba feliz de estar aquí, que ganar una etapa es muchísimo y que lo hace por su familia y que le han estado ayudando siempre. *Su mujer está embarazada, que va a ser madre aproximadamente en septiembre.*

**Example 9. (from stage 11)**

These additions are often accompanied by the interventions of Pedro Delgado, who plays an important role supporting and assisting de Andrés with his interpretation.

Carlos de Andrés: No he entendido bien esto que ha dicho ahora al final, pero, bueno, fíjate, se queda ahí el tío. Está un poco sí, como que no acaba de...

Pedro Delgado: Lo que otras veces ha hablado por los codos y te cuenta en detalle el sprint, esta vez han sido solo agradecimientos...

**Example 10. (from stage 5)**

It has already been said that the interview from stage 5 was difficult, due the emotional state of the stage winner. This situation entailed some problems of understanding, which are openly recognised by de Andrés in this example (10). In fact, he says, by the end of the interview: "I haven't understood what he has said now, at the end, but, well, look, the guy stays there. He is a little bit, like he wasn't able to...". To this stressful moment where accuracy can be put at risk, Pedro Delgado provides assistance to his colleague, adding that Cavendish is normally a very talkative cyclist, who describes his sprints in detail, but today he was only thankful.

In the following example (11), Delgado joins in and annotates which jersey (green) the interviewee is fighting for.

Carlos de Andrés: Bueno, Philipssen decía, sobre todo, aquí al final le preguntaba si podía seguir en esa lucha...

Pedro Delgado: ...por el maillot verde...

Carlos de Andrés: ...por el maillot verde, sí, dice que...

**Example 11. (from stage 16)**

And lastly (example 12), it can be seen how Pedro Delgado offers support to his colleague by intervening and providing the accurate interpretation that de Andrés did not render.

Carlos de Andrés: De hecho, ha dicho que con Urška, ha explicado que entrenaba habitualmente por aquí...
Pedro Delgado: ...que decía que Urška que, que han hecho tantas veces el recorrido que Urška ya lo odiaba por hacer siempre este recorrido.
Carlos de Andrés: Ah, vale, que esta parte no la había...
Pedro Delgado: ...dice como que no puedo malgastar eso, la he hecho sufrir tanto que había que ganar, ¿no?

**Example 12. (from stage 21)**

In this example (12), Carlos de Andrés is struggling with the part in which Pogačar (winner of the final stage in Nice and the 2024 Tour overall general classification winner) is explaining that he had done a lot of reconnaissance training of the 21st stage with his girlfriend, Urška Žigart (also a professional cyclist). When Pedro Delgado sees that his colleague is in trouble, he intervenes by giving the data de Andrés did not understand, and he explains that Urška hated the route, because they had done it so many times. De Andrés answers, sincerely: “ah, ok, this part I haven’t [understood]”. And, so, Delgado keeps on being of assistance to his colleague: “he says that he made her suffer so much and that is why he could not let the chance pass and win...” Carlos de Andrés and Pedro Delgado are known for their spontaneity and naturalness in their commentaries. This is something that has been proven in some of the previous examples, where de Andrés uses a colloquial vocabulary or is not ashamed to recognise that he did not understand something, as it can be seen in example 13:

Journalist: This a, the dream of a career, this is what you have been fighting for, for years and years and years... to cross the finish line victoriously.
de Andrés: El sueño de tu carrera, ¿no? Tantos años esperándolo. Uff, va a ser difícil esto, ¿eh? (Ríen) [...] Luego no había hecho ninguna carrera antes del Tour porque quería estar en el nacimiento de su hijo y que el equipo se lo aceptó, en fin, que todo ha salido como muy rodado, ¿no?
Delgado: Sí, sí, muy bonito, sí, sí, la verdad.
de Andrés: Al principio no entendía, ¿eh? con tanto...
Delgado: Emoción
de Andrés: Sí, con tanta emoción en sus palabras.

**Example 13. (from stage 18)**

In this example (13), de Andrés laughs and recognises that “this [in reference to the interpretation] is going to be difficult”, because the cyclist is overwhelmed with emotion. After the interpretation is done, he says again that at the beginning he could not understand him, and Delgado intervenes, adding that it was because it was a very emotional moment.

The two commentators even make jokes during the interpreting process, as can be observed in the last example (14). This may be regarded as a deliberate addition, intended to enhance naturalness for the home audience.

de Andrés: Sí, claro, yo lo veo muy fácil esto. Dice: “este año he conseguido cuatro, el año pasado, dos, voy a una media de tres por Tour, esto se cuenta muy fácil” (ríe).

#### Example 14. (from stage 19)

After the stage, Pogačar speaks about how he could break the record that Cavendish had only just set in this Tour de France. Given that this is an objective difficult to attain, de Andrés responds with irony, opening his interpretation by remarking that the calculations appear very simple for Pogačar —who has been on a streak of stage victories for several years now.

#### 4.3. Formal characteristics: reported speech, disfluencies, and speech acts

In the examples examined, formal characteristics in de Andrés' interpreting have been observed. The first one has to do with the use of reported speech. Reported speech is used to put the speaker's words or ideas in subordinate clauses by using reporting verbs and changing the person and tense. Reported speech, according to Harris (1990), is something that a professional interpreter should never use. Carlos de Andrés speaks using the third person singular, *verba dicendi* and the conjunction “that”, as well. This way, 52 *dice que* ('he says that') and 7 *decía que* ('he said that') can be found in the verbatim transcriptions.

Something similar happens with the “interpreting disfluencies”, which, according to Zhao (2022, p.3) “mainly include pauses, fillers, repetitions, and articulatory disfluencies”. De Andrés constantly uses fillers like *bueno* ('well') —found 20 times along the corpus—, *¿eh?* —20 times— and questions tags (*¿no?*) —25 times. Sometimes, when understanding seems to pose problems, the commentator tends to repeat words and sentences and he even shows articulatory disfluencies, i. e., he stutters. Stuttering is something common in public speech when there is anxiety (Craig, 1990; Menzies et al., 1999; Messenger et al., 2004). As mentioned in the introduction (Jiménez Serrano, 2011), media interpreting —particularly within sports contexts— can be an extremely stressful activity. This stress can give rise to various formal characteristics that interact with the transfer of meaning to the domestic audience during live broadcasts and interviews.

#### 5. Discussion and conclusion

The interpretative acts discussed in this paper can be framed as a type of sports media interpreting performed by a non-professional (Ghignoli & Torres Díaz, 2015). Media interpreting can be likened to other forms of translation, including audiovisual translation (Kalinin, 2018) and transediting (Schäffner, 2012), as well as to other types of interpreting, such as conference interpreting (Kurz, 2002). However, it presents specific difficulties and constraints, some of them being those related to stress or the presence of a multilingual context (Jiménez Serrano, 2011).

By studying how consecutive and simultaneous modes coexist in media interpreting a clearer understanding of the workings of live broadcast interpretation can be attained. Gaining insight into how different modes are used —and, often, combined— and how they influence communication quality (Gile, 2001) is useful for both professionals —

trained interpreters but also the professionals who have had not interpreting training—and researchers in sports and related fields.

Consecutive interpreting, which constitutes 50% of the interpretative acts performed by sports journalist Carlos de Andrés, highlights its significance as the dominant mode in the context examined. Summaries—sometimes accompanied by note taking—are typically provided, lasting variably but typically around one and a half minutes. This strategy requires content condensation, so that the audience comprehends key messages without interrupting the broadcast's flow. In the time-sensitive and fast-paced context of sports, such summarisation proves essential for making sure meaning is transferred in a clear manner. The recurrent pattern of shorter interpreted segments relative to the original interviews further underscores the importance of summarisation.

Simultaneous interpreting appeared rarely, with just a single occurrence in the corpus, whereas hybrid interpreting modes were frequently adopted—40% of the cases. These hybrid methods involved switching between simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, depending on contextual variables like emotional content, interview duration, and speaker-related challenges such as the speaker's accent and intelligibility. This oscillation between modes can be related to the constraints and difficulties present in media interpreting (Jiménez Serrano, 2011; Mullock, 2012, and Akbulut & Sabat, 2023) and because both modes can provide similar levels of accuracy in the message delivery (Gile, 2001). Such flexibility demonstrates the interpreter's adaptive strategies to optimise comprehension and efficacy while communicating.

Although content was transferred reliably, occasional misunderstandings and semantic inconsistencies were observed, particularly in relation to emotional expressions, as it happened in example 1, when the interviewee mentioned thanking God, but de Andrés emphasized that he had expressed his gratitude to his teammates. Nevertheless, the interpreter's efforts to clarify statements illustrate a capacity to preserve coherence during the broadcast despite misunderstandings.

From a linguistic perspective, de Andrés's approach ensures technically accurate communication. His precise use of terminology—which reflects his deep knowledge of the cycling domain—helps compensate for inconsistencies arising from the more emotional segments of the original interviews. An example for this is example 5, when the sentence “he did a super good job” became *le ha llevado hacia delante y por eso ha podido encontrar una buena colocación* (‘he took him to the front line and that is why he could find a good position’). This functional compensation contributes to the accuracy of the interpretation and underscores the interpreter's skill. In addition to that, personal comments and additional sports commentary serve to further enrich the interpretative process. Visual cues, such as drawing attention to a cyclist's emotional response, were often used, and extra details about the cyclists' personal and professional life were also provided.

Because of all this, it can be stated that the interpretation delivered by de Andrés is adequate, since this non-professional media interpreter—and natural translator—demonstrates proficiency in communication skills (Pignataro, 2011; Falbo, 2011). In fact, in spite of the presence of some formal errors, like the use of reported speech, repetitions, fillers and the presence of some stuttering (Zhao, 2022).

Furthermore, Delgado's supportive contributions—which include clarifying ambiguous segments and offering extra information—improve the overall quality of the interpretative act and demonstrate effective teamwork during the live broadcast. The interpersonal dynamics between de Andrés and Delgado showcase their readiness to address misunderstandings, use humour, and assist one another, adding authenticity and engagement to the broadcast. As Ghignoli & Torres Díaz stated (2015, p. 206), this kind of interpretative acts work because "they communicate, and they are as entertaining as the show itself", so it can be stated that they deliver performances that can be considered functional, and that not only language is interpreted, but also the mediatic aspects of cycling for Spanish viewers.

In conclusion, although the corpus used in the present study can be considered a relatively small corpus, the insights yielded from the interpreting data can contribute to wider knowledge about interpreting in sports coverage. The interpreting techniques and strategies used by de Andrés in his interpretative acts can be applied to other sports contexts, like those mentioned—football, MotoGR, Formula One, etc.

The coexistence of modes in sports media interpreting is marked by flexibility, adaptability, and strategic content and emotion management. Employing hybrid strategies enables interpreters to effectively meet the challenges of fast-moving and demanding live broadcast settings, balancing both accuracy and completeness to maintain audience engagement.

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## Notes

<sup>i</sup> It must be added that, for the Tour de France, RTVE works closely with French public tv, since both of them belong to European Broadcast Union (EBU). Furthermore, although RTVE has limited regional variations in its broadcasts, it must be said that its programming relating to the Tour de France is in Spanish.

<sup>ii</sup> Barcelona, Spain, 1964.

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<sup>iii</sup> Segovia, Spain, 1960, a.k.a. *Perico Delgado*.

<sup>iv</sup> A person who is non-professional and performs his interpretative acts within a media context.

<sup>v</sup> In order to analyse that, it would be necessary for de Andrés to be in full view all the time. de Andrés cannot be seen for the entirety of the broadcast, but during the times he is visible he can be seen taking notes while delivering the message.

<sup>vi</sup> Amplification occurs when the translation in the target language uses more signifiers to cover syntactic or lexical gaps than the message in the source language did.

<sup>vii</sup> According to Gile (2001, p. 17), the level of accuracy obtained by using the consecutive or simultaneous mode can vary depending on different factors, so no mode is superior to the other.

<sup>viii</sup> Girmay (stage 3) is from Eritrea and Cavendish (stage 5), although being British, has a strong northern accent, being a native to the Isle of Man to a Yorkshire mother. Moreover, he speaks very quickly.