

Accounting for Defeat

Sporting Speech and Communicative Resources in a World Cup Final Loss

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1. Introduction

The objective of this paper is to analyse excerpts of the Brazilian sporting speeches regarding the final match of the football World Cup of 1998, between Brazil and France, through the discursive resources presented by the sporting commentators and discussants of all the Brazilian broadcasting stations that presented this match, won by the French side, 3-0. Since all the five open channels to broadcast the match had shown the “same” set of images – if one considers the images apart from their verbal definition –, aspects of this match are of particular interest, comparing different accounts for a same event². This match decided the World Cup, and for the Brazilian media, the Brazilian team woke up as the “absolute favourite” for the title. However, the match finished with a Brazilian defeat – by the way, the largest difference of scoring on the whole history of Brazilian participation in the World Cup. The changes on the discourse during the match are an interesting phenomenon to investigate, and this broken expectation and the subsequent accounts presented by the speakers and discussants made it paradigmatic of a class of events in which the sportive field is particularly rich. The joy of victory and its counterpart, the agony of defeat are on the very core of sports passion.

In theoretical terms, this paper also wishes to propose a respecification of the notion of “account”, from its Symbolic Interactionist sense – a verbal “reparation” towards a frustrated outcome to a given expectation – towards a

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2 On the 2002 and 2006 World Cups, the same comparative approach was impossible, as Rede Globo granted broadcasting ‘exclusivity’ for Brazilian TV.

more Ethnomethodological sense, that of a procedure of making sense of *any* situation, not only broken expectancies.

2. The mediated sports

The Sports Press

Within the field of journalistic discourse, one specific modality, the “sports speech”, will be regarded on this paper. The so-called “sports press” can be characterized as the journalistic interpretation – and/or production – of the facts related to the field of the sports practices. It deals with the sport practices that have become a “show”, with “showbiz” features, something to be seen. The incorporation of sports by the media creates a separation between practice and consumption, since there is no need to practice a sport to watch it on the TV and thrill with the results of the matches. The broadcasting of sports events – in which the players are, as a rule, professionals – increases the number of “laypersons” that need to “understand” what is there to be seen, creating a demand for “commentators” – very often former players – that, with their specific competence on the matter, “translate” the movements of the game in tactic and technical terms, reinforcing, by opposing to the “lays”, the primacy of professionalism, based on an asymmetry of knowledge.

The transmission of a football match by the television simulates to a certain extent the experience of being on the stadium with a small radio on the ear. The different cameras follow the main line of action – along with takes on other details of the setting – whilst the voice *off* of the speaker says – defines – what is going on. It is evident that both experiences are different. On a stadium, the supporter shares the feeling of “being there” along with thousands of other supporters, while at home, watching television, such social dimension almost inexists, unless under very special circumstances, as an important goal. The point of view is also different. On the television, the match happens only where the ball is. On a TV transmission, nobody has the global view – the experience – of the pitch that someone that is “in there” has. On the beginning of TV transmissions of football matches, a single camera followed the action using a wide open plan, simulating in a way – at least by the fixed point of view – the view of a supporter present at

the stadium. Nowadays, dozens of fixed and mobile cameras spread along the pitch showing many aspects of the game, allowing its construction in a narrative way, as a meta-representation of a match. The images that are effectively broadcasted are chosen according to a particular codification of the media, as for example replays of a goal under different positions, reverse angle cameras, and so on. These sequential images, along with the description of the speaker and the opinions of the commentators, build a version of what is going on in the pitch.

Journalism and Subjectivity: the sports speech

On the opposite of what occurs on telejournalism, where the presenter reads the text of the news written on a teleprompter, with a fixed gaze towards the camera – thus, eye to eye with the audience – on a football match speech, the speaker *describes* what he is seeing down there on the pitch, with his voice off. His image, when appears, is always on the time out. The description of the match is always illustrated by the images of the match. Even using codifications and a particular jargon related to this sporting speech, the speaker must always describe what he is seeing *now*, in real time, opening a possibility of manifestation of the speaker's subjectivity, that puts himself as subject on his speech, thus turning flexible the rigid institutional controls upon the journalistic discourse – as for example, on the so-called “Handbooks of Journalistic Styling” – trying at any cost to “hide” the subjectivity of the enunciator, “not allowing” (forbidding?) some definite terms to be used, as they could turn explicit valorative and/or personal positions of the journalist.

On a football match transmission, one of the most evident way for a speaker to manifest his/her subjectivity could be his/her personal “support” for one of the teams in the field. In general, the speaker avoids evidencing such a preference, for supporters of both teams may be listening to the transmission. However, on international matches, when the speech is transmitted only for the speaker's own country, there is no problem if the speaker eventually manifest his enthusiastic support for the “national” team – whether a club or the national team itself –, furthermore, it is expected by the audience that he does so. The following part, translated from the speech of Paulo Stein, speaker of the *Manchete* network, about the moment before the entrance in field of Brazilian and French teams is particularly illustrative of such “consented partiality”.

There are moments that get recorded in our life. They stay on your reminds, at your memory, in your heart. Imagine in ours, we are supporters just like you, we are emotional as you, we are Brazilian just like you, and we still have the possibility, beyond being at the stadium to see the final match, to could even speak and cry out “goal!!!” loud...³

Juarez Soares, nicknamed “China”, commentator of the SBT network, after the defeat also evidenced the double role of journalist and supporter, on the following terms:

...there is a sorrow that the Brazilian supporters, I understand, they are suffering, and all of us here, it is evident, because we are journalists, and beside that we are Brazilian team supporters, there is evidently a sorrow that we understand...⁴

So, this particular kind of journalistic description, with its tacit consent for the manifestation of subjectivity will be the data to be analysed from now on.

Ethnomethodology and the accounting practices for frustrated expectancies

Traditionally, the notion of accounting, taken as a communicative procedure designed to socially explain, say, a gap between an expectation and a frustrated outcome is connected to the theoretical terms of symbolic interactionism, mainly to the writings of M. Scott and S. Lyman (1968, 1970), but also on the early Goffman’s (1997) paper “On Cooling the Mark Out”, among others.

For example, in the paper “Accounts”, Scott and Lyman define an account as a statement made by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behavior – whether that behavior is his own or that of others, and whether the proximate cause for the statement arises from the actor himself or from someone else. (1968: 46)

3 Existem momentos que ficam gravados na vida da gente. Fica na sua lembrança, na sua memória, no seu coração. Imagina da gente, que é tão torcedor quanto você, que é tão emotivo quanto você, que é tão brasileiro quanto você, e que tem ainda a possibilidade, de além de estar no estádio para ver a final, poder falar e gritar “gol” alto...

4 ... há uma tristeza que a torcida brasileira, eu compreendo, tá sofrendo e nós todos aqui, evidentemente, porque somos jornalistas, né, e ademais de jornalistas somos torcedores da seleção brasileira, há evidentemente a tristeza que a gente entende.

On the ethnomethodological tradition, however, the notion of accounts and accounting is taken in a much wider and more generic sense, referring to *any* sense that is made of the social world, and not only an “excuse” or “justification” related to an untoward situation. An account, in this sense, can be taken as a *description*. As Heritage (1984) points out, the notion of account for ethnomethodology is much more connected with its character of *action*. For him, the sense of an account is, just like actions, “heavily depended on the context of its production. Descriptive accounts, in short, are indexical.” (1984: 141)

Thus, it can be said that an “account”, in the S. I. sense, is a particular case of a wider class of “accounts”, in the E. M. sense. Although the situation described above is a typical application of the symbolic interactionist notion of account, I believe that it is worthy of an analytic respecification in terms of ethnomethodology and membership categorisation analysis. I believe that it is possible to take Scott and Lyman’s notion of accounts as merely part of a broader concern with society member’s culturally-methodic, *in situ* accounting practices. It is this more generic concern that Garfinkel (1967) addresses – these accounting practices are what he calls members’ “practical sociological reasoning” in everyday circumstances.

Comments on method

The final match of the World Cup of 1998, between Brazil and France, according to audience data from Ibope⁵, had an audience rate around 94% of the turned-on TV sets, counting the audience of all of the five networks that broadcasted the event. They were, in alphabetical order: *Bandeirantes*, *Globo*, *Manchete*, *Record* and *SBT*. All these transmissions had been recorded in video. Relating the particular power of definition of reality of the media, and mainly of the sporting press to the circumstances of this match, in which the Brazilian team was incontestably defeated, my intention is to analyse the discursive devices that play a part on the construction of a dominant version of what has happened on the game. Each of the five transmissions were watched several times, and the speeches and commentaries were transcribed.

5 Ibope: Brazilian Institute for Public Opinion and Statistics, one of the major providers of data related to media audience in Brazil.

Regarding the audience rating, the massive audience numbers in Brazil on the World Cup of 1998 belonged to “*Rede Globo*”, that presented an average share of audience of more than 75% during the transmissions of the Brazilian team’s matches.

The option for watching every transmission, however, owes itself to the need of hearing all the “voices” related to this process, intending to build a contextualized oral source *corpus*. To analyse exclusively the speech of Galvão Bueno – the official speaker of *Rede Globo* – means to collaborate with the hegemonic power of this network on Brazilian media, since it ignores – or better, silences – the competing voices, that certainly present other versions of the transmitted facts, defining the situation in other terms. So, giving voice to a multiplicity of points of view allows the relativization of the categorical affirmations of a single enunciator without reply, making possible a critical view of the definition of reality proposed by the whole group of speakers and commentators. In this paper, all the networks had “voice”, since the all-mighty *Rede Globo* with its 75% share of audience (that, projected to the Brazilian population, means something like 100 million viewers), until the “small” *Rede Manchete*, with its 1% of audience (that means around 1 million viewers). The other networks considered had the following shares of audience: *Bandeirantes* (10% in average), *SBT* (around 7%) and *Record* (around 5%), according to the Ibope audience data.

3. The final match of the World Cup of 1998.

Contextualizations

On the 12th of July of 1998, billions of people all over the world sat in front of their television sets to watch the final match of the World Cup, between Brazil and France. Brazil, then the holder of the Cup, was considered favourite by the Brazilian press, after defeating the strong Dutch team on the free kicks. To the French team, the Brazilian press attributed the advantages of playing at home and the so-called “Marseillaise effect”, a sort of psychological advantage, the courage brought to the French players – and consequent fear to the Brazilians – when the famous French national anthem were played on a giant stadium crowded with French fans. In the pitch, however, the media discourse had no doubts: the Brazilian team was infinitely superior, regardless that France had made an excellent campaign.

The Brazilian campaign, on the other hand, had been uneven, the team suffered a defeat against Norway, and had a bad time to win against opponents considered easy, such as Scotland and Denmark. Against Holland, a dramatic draw on the 90 minutes and on the extra time took the decision to the free kicks, when two savings by Taffarel, the Brazilian goalkeeper, classified Brazil for the final match and made possible the conquest of the penta-championship of the World Cup. If the media was sceptic regarding the Brazilian team throughout the competition, after that victory against Holland, the more exaggerated patriotism took over the pages of newspapers, magazines and television news, gaining the streets. An outdoor advertisement of those days said: *'It is time for the Frenchs to take a bath'*, referring with obvious prejudice to the Brazilian stereotype towards French people, according to which they do not take bath, as well as a reference to the Brazilian expression "a ball bath", meaning a vexatious defeat. In another advertisement, the headline said: *'Their goalkeeper is bald of fear'*, alluding to the bald French goalkeeper, Fabien Barthez, attributing it to "fear" of facing the Brazilian team. Many sportive commentators alluded to the match against Holland as the "real" final match, i. e., the match with the two better teams of the competition, since the other two teams on the semifinals – France and Croatia – had no "real" chance to win the competition. From the 7th of July – when Brazil defeated Holland – until the 12th this was the line of the discourse on the Brazilian newspapers, television and advertisements. As the Brazilian sportive jargon says, a feeling of "taken-for-grantedness" took on the whole country, a dominant version regarding the Brazilian expectative to the final match of the World Cup.

The match

A brief resume of the final match of the World Cup of 1998 will help to pose the discursive context of speakers and commentators. The match was balanced until 27 minutes, when Zidane scored for France. In the end of the first half, at 46 minutes, Zidane headed again a corner kick and made 2 x 0 for France. On the second half, the Brazilian team tried to score all the time, but in vain. On the very end of the match, at 95 minutes, a fast counter-attack resulted on the French third goal, with Emmanuel Petit defining the historical score.

Until the French first goal, the discourse of the speakers described a balanced game, with a slight advantage for the Brazilian team, even if France was better on the attack.

It is natural that France attacks more in the beginning of the match. (...) The Brazilian team is still a little frightened with the roar of the French supporters, but this anxiety in the beginning is absolutely normal, Brazil plays on the adversary's home (...) We have to face them, to make this yellow shirt grows, then they will feel it! (G. Bueno, Globo, 5')⁶

The Brazilian team is beginning to calm down. That French euphoria seems to have calmed, too. (S. Luiz, SBT, 15')⁷

We can note something: the Brazilian team is calm enough to change passes. (Paulo Stein, Manchete, 16')⁸

The Brazilian team is playing well, is controlling the game. (...) More and more the Brazilian team is getting tuned. (Luciano do Valle, Bandeirantes, 19')⁹

A good Brazilian attack at 20' makes the discourse more optimistic:

Barthez failed! Bebeto was about to score, because the ball was escaping from Barthez's hands right above the line! This goalkeeper is crazy to hand over the World Cup! Write it up: he is crazy to hand this World Cup over! (G. Bueno)¹⁰

Is starting to open, this French, he is starting to open, this French goalkeeper! (S. Luiz) [J. Soares, following:] The French team is weak. If Brazil had a little bit more group feeling and confidence, Brazil would be supposed to have already scored.¹¹

The first French goal, at 27' starts to change the discursive tune of the speakers and commentators regarding the performance of the Brazilian team,

6 É natural que a França venha para cima no começo do jogo. (...) Está ainda meio assustado o time brasileiro com o grito da torcida francesa, mas esse nervosismo no início é absolutamente normal, o Brasil joga na casa do adversário. (...) O negócio é botar pressão pra cima deles, fazer essa camisa amarela crescer, que aí eles sentem! (Galvão Bueno, Globo, 5', primeiro tempo)

7 O Brasil tá começando a botar os nervos no lugar. Aquela euforia do time francês parece que baixou um pouco. (Sílvio Luis, SBT, 15', primeiro tempo)

8 Uma coisa a gente percebe: a seleção brasileira tem tranquilidade para tocar a bola. (Paulo Stein, Manchete, 16', primeiro tempo)

9 Vai bem a seleção, vamos tomando conta do jogo. (...) Cada vez vai se acertando mais a seleção brasileira. (Luciano do Valle, Bandeirantes, 19', primeiro tempo)

10 Barthez falhou! O Bebeto ia pedindo o gol, porque a bola ia escapando da mão do Barthez em cima da linha! Esse goleiro está louquinho pra entregar essa Copa do Mundo! Escrevam aí o que eu estou dizendo: ele está louquinho pra entregar essa Copa do Mundo! (Galvão Bueno)

11 Tá começando a abrir, esse francês, tá começando a abrir, esse goleiro francês! (Sílvio Luis) [Juarez Soares, na sequência:] O time da França é fraco. Se o Brasil tivesse um pouquinho mais de entrosamento e confiança, o Brasil já era pra ter feito o gol.

particularly on the individual “blaming” for the goal to the Brazilian wing Roberto Carlos, that gave in a corner when he could have let the ball cross the side line. From that corner kick, Zidane scored.

France scored, the situation gets more difficult, but yet there is a century of playing time, and Brazil, when underscoring, is a team that grows a lot. When the score is 0 x 0, they keep losing time. They suffered a goal, and you will see Brazil grows and face France. A stupid act by Roberto Carlos, why to do such a stupidity he had done there on the corner? (J. Soares)¹²

World Cup is a serious matter! A World Cup final match is a very serious matter! It is not place for kidding or juggling! Trying to juggle, instead of a sidethrow, there were a corner, and what happened? Zidane’s head, ball on the ground, French goal. (G. Bueno)¹³

At 32’, a violent collision between Ronaldo and the French goalkeeper Barthez – considered a mere accident by almost all the speakers – was taken as a vile aggression of the goalkeeper by the *Record* network speaker, Luiz Alfredo:

And he did not ease up, this Barthez, uh? This disguised French goalkeeper did not ease at all. Look how after the collision he still pushes Ronaldo’s stomach...¹⁴

Their collision was purely casual. (Paulo Stein)¹⁵

On the last minute of the first half, the second French goal, under almost equal circumstances of the first one refrained the speaker’s optimism, watching the Brazilian team leaving the pitch completely downcast:

12 A França faz o gol, a situação fica mais difícil, mas ainda tem um século de jogo ainda, e o Brasil quando joga atrás, é um time que cresce muito. Quando tá o a o, fica naquele nhém-nhém-nhém. Tomou o gol, você vai ver que o Brasil vai crescer e vai pra cima da França. Uma besteira do Roberto Carlos, pra que fazer aquela besteira que ele fez lá no escanteio? (Juares Soares)

13 Copa do Mundo é coisa séria! Final de Copa do Mundo é coisa muito séria! Não é lugar de gracinha e de malabarismo! Na tentativa de malabarismo, em vez de lateral, pintou um escanteio, o que aconteceu? Cabeça de Zidane, bola no chão, gol da França. (Galvão Bueno)

14 E ele não aliviou não, o Barthez, hein? Esse mascarado desse goleiro francês não aliviou, não. Olha depois como ele ainda dá uma empurrada no estômago do Ronaldinho...

15 O encontro dos dois foi puramente casual. (Paulo Stein)

The Brazilian team is unrecognizable! (Luciano do Valle)¹⁶

I have seen this Brazilian team grow under difficult situations. I have seen this Brazilian team grow against Italy, losing for 2 x 0, to turn the score of important matches. Now, to walk around downcast, get out of the field downcast like this, do not have anyone who goes there to take the ball out of the goal, that takes the ball, brings back to the centre, that shout, that says: "Come on! Let's do it!" In such a way, leaving the field in such way, the things get too much more complicated, because it needs a lot of bravery, it needs a lot of courage, it needs a lot of will to be able to turn out a match in which one is losing for 2 x 0. Passing to the side, juggling and kidding no one turns back the score of any match, and even less a final match of a World Cup when you are losing for 2 x 0. (G. Bueno)¹⁷

On the second half, even the massive attack of the Brazilian team were not enough to make the speakers more optimistic:

It is a World Cup final, everything is possible, all are details... (...) The French team is completely hemmed in, there, completely frightened, Aimé Jacquet is telling them to attack. (Luciano do Valle, 46')¹⁸

They are really tight with Brazilian pressure on the second half. (S. Luiz, 48')¹⁹

I feel sad because I do not see a single yellow-green shirt moving on the galleries. Just when the Brazilian team is pressing, when it is fighting. And Roberto Carlos is there: "Come on, come on!" Asking, asking for a reaction, and it is just the French supporters that are showing themselves up in the galleries. (G. Bueno, 70')²⁰

16 Está irreconhecível a seleção brasileira! (Luciano do Valle)

17 Já vi essa seleção brasileira crescer em situações difíceis. Já vi essa seleção brasileira crescer pra cima da Itália perdendo por 2 a 0, virar jogos importantes. Agora, andar assim de cabeça baixa, sair de cabeça baixa desse jeito, não ter gente que vá buscar a bola dentro do gol, que pegue a bola, que traga pro meio, que grite, que diga: "vamos lá, vamos fazer!", Desse jeito, saindo de campo assim, dessa forma, a coisa fica muito complicada, porque é preciso é muita raça, é preciso é muita garra, é preciso é muita vontade para poder virar o jogo que se está perdendo de 2 a 0. Tocando bola daqui pra lá, dando bicicleta e fazendo graça não se vira jogo nenhum, e muito menos final de Copa do Mundo quando se está perdendo de 2 a 0. (Galvão Bueno)

18 É uma final de Copa, tudo é possível, são detalhes... (...) O time da França está todo apertado, ali, todo apavorado, o Aimé Jacquet manda o time sair. (Luciano do Valle, 1', segundo tempo)

19 Eles tão realmente encurralados com a pressão do Brasil no segundo tempo. (Sílvio Luis, 3', segundo tempo)

20 Fico triste de não ver uma camisa em verde-amarelo se mexendo no estádio. Na hora em que o Brasil tá apertando, que tá indo pra cima. E o Roberto Carlos tá aí: "vamo, vamo!" Pedindo, pedindo garra, e só

The French supporters feel that their team is in trouble. (Luciano do Valle, 70')²¹

Time kept running and the Brazilian team did not score. Hope began to give way to resignation, trying to find something positive under such circumstances:

Even if it does not get it, Brazil is brave, is the only tetra-champion on the finishing of the century, but still runs after the “penta”. (G. Bueno, 80')²²

Djorkaeff is desperate, you see, they are winning 2 x 0 and the French team is still desperate, you can see the respect that France has for Brazil. They are desperate, wishing the game to finish. (Luciano do Valle, 91')²³

[regarding the same image in which Luciano do Valle saw the “despair” of the French players, Luiz Alfredo has commented:] The French players start to embrace themselves and celebrate.²⁴

On the Record network, a dialog between the speaker Luiz Alfredo and the showman “Ratinho” gives voice to disillusionment:

[Luiz Alfredo, 85'] At least, Ratinho, there will have two allotments on the end of the match, a truck and a house worth of R\$ 50.000 [around £ 20.000]
[Ratinho answers:] Oh, yes, I would say to you, “Big shit!”, but I will not say this, will I?²⁵

When the game finished, a few seconds after the third French goal, all the speakers and commentators made their evaluations about the match and its consequences, trying in some way to “console” the audience, whilst the images showed the Brazilian players desolate, sat down crying on the pitch, making a strong contrast with the overflowing joy of the French players and supporters.

o torcedor francês que está se manifestando no estádio. (Galvão Bueno, 25', segundo tempo)

21 A torcida francesa sente que a sua seleção está em apuros. (Luciano do Valle, 25', segundo tempo)

22 Mesmo que não consiga, o Brasil é valente, é o único a ser tetracampeão no final deste século, mas ainda busca o penta. (Galvão Bueno, 35', segundo tempo)

23 O Djorkaeff tá desesperado, você vê, tá 2 a 0 e ainda tá desesperada a França, você vê o respeito que a França tem pelo Brasil. Estão desesperados, querendo que acabe o jogo. (Luciano do Valle, 46', segundo tempo)

24 ...começam a se abraçar e a comemorar os jogadores franceses.

25 (Luiz Alfredo, 40', segundo tempo) Pelo menos, viu, Ratinho, tem dois sorteios depois do jogo, um caminhão e uma casa no valor de 50.000 reais. [Ratinho responde na sequência:] Pois é, viu, eu queria falar procê, eu ia falar: “grande merda!”, mas eu não vou falar, né?

Words of Consolation: accounting for defeat

For Brazilian supporters – category under which I include myself –, this match was a great disappointment. In part, the disappointment was owed to the huge expectation created around the match by the media discourse, on press and advertisements, with the assurance of the opinion of the “specialists” of the sports press, according to which once the Dutch team were beaten, the final match against France would be easy. One commentator from *Rede Globo*, Arnaldo César Coelho, had previewed a “*goleada*”, a Brazilian victory with a high score, just a few minutes before the starting whistle. Given the frustration of the expectations, whilst the French television showed their champions’ party, each speaker or commentator tried to “console” the audience with long speeches.

A “consolation strategy” widely used were to compare the Brazilian team with other world great teams that were not on the final match. Galvão Bueno not even waited the game to finish to “tell a story”:

It is very important start to tell a story. That the important, really, everybody wants to win, of course. But in a World Cup, how many laid on the way? Argentina laid, England laid even on the “eighths”, Spain even did not passed the first part of the competition, England stayed on the eighths-of-final. Then, on the quarters-of-final, we had Argentina falling on the way, Italy fell on the way on the quarters-of-final, Holland stayed on the semifinal and Brazil has arrived to play this final match against France. In a detail of two goals suffered on corner kicks. It does not mean that the Brazilian team – of course – did play well? No, did not play well. Is winning the Cup? No, of course is not doing so. But it doesn’t mean that the Brazilian team suddenly changed from a team of heroes to a team of cowards or weaks. Far from it, it does not exist. (...) Nobody changes from hero to villain instantly just because lost a match. I keep my opinion: it was brave, could not have been brilliant, but had been brave, had merits to come to the final match and was valiant on the final match the Brazilian team²⁶.

26 É muito importante já ir contando aqui uma história. Que o importante, realmente, todo mundo quer é vencer, é claro. Mas numa Copa do Mundo, quantos ficaram pelo caminho. A Argentina que ficou, a Inglaterra que ficou já nas oitavas, a Espanha que sequer passou da primeira fase, a Inglaterra que ficou nas oitavas-de-final. Depois, nas quartas-de-final, nós tivemos a Argentina caindo pelo caminho, a Itália caindo pelo caminho nas quartas-de-final, a Holanda ficou na semifinal, e o Brasil chegou pra jogar essa final contra a França. No detalhe de dois gols sofridos em cobranças de escanteio. Isso não quer dizer que a seleção brasileira – é claro – jogou bem? Não, não jogou bem. Está ganhando

The shadow of the other Brazilian defeat on the final match of a World Cup, on 1950, also appeared, although it was completely denied by the *Rede Globo* speaker:

It's the end of the match at the Stade de France! 3 for France, null for the Brazilian team. And in the end – just regard how the things are, and how destiny accomplishes itself – it is the worst Brazilian defeat on the whole history of the World Cup, a three-score defeat. Petit's scoring, on the last minute of the match, the biggest Brazilian defeat – Zagallo is going to salute Aimé Jacquet: Beautiful, Zagallo! Today, a French newspaper had shown on its headlines: "Zagallo, a football giant", on L'Equipe. And he is showing a great attitude embracing Aimé Jacquet. It is the end of the "penta" dream for Zagallo. It is the end for the players, it is the end for all of us. But he is showing dignity, Zagallo. There he is, a firm face, the tears want to wet his eyes, of course, just like mine, just like yours there in Brazil. Ronaldo, you really did not have physical condition. And France, above all, deserve its party. [For us] it was not supposed to be, given what has been shown on the pitch by the Brazilian team. Maybe it could have been a lack of daring, certainly a lack of intelligence, today we had a lack of technical details, more... more football. France celebrates, the "penta" dream will be delayed, maybe it comes true in 2002. Yes, it can come true in 2002, but only Brazil is "tetra". We wished to be "penta", nobody could be "tetra" this century, in the end, in the end of this millennium. I think there are two things that must really be said, and said very clearly. There is Rivaldo. Cafu, you were a giant, Cafu, during the whole World Cup, Cafu. Junior Baiano lived in heaven, lived in hell. He failed, he saved, sometimes failed more than saved, sometimes saved more than failed. Edmundo hit the pitch with determination, all of them, all of them really fought. But France celebrates, let's show also the French party. Here is the French party, the players lay down, the French party in front of the City Hall. Two things must be clear, definitive and absolute: France deserve the party that will take the French night away, in Paris, in every French town. There will be no space left for the French people celebrate, because the French team really deserve the celebration – there is the cock, the French

o título? Não, é claro, não está ganhando. Mas isso não quer dizer que a seleção brasileira de repente passe de uma seleção de heróis pra uma seleção de covardes ou de fracos. Longe disso, isso não existe. (...) Ninguém vira de herói pra bandido de uma hora pra outra porque perdeu o jogo. Continua a minha opinião: foi valorosa, pode não ter sido brilhante, mas foi valorosa, teve méritos pra chegar à final e foi valente na final a seleção brasileira.

symbol of... – really deserve the party. Putting all together, it was the best behaved team. They were scored against only twice in this World Cup, and knew how to win it. It may have been here a lack of intelligence here, of daring there, definition here. It was strong, it was brave the Brazilian team, made its way to the final match. 32 teams started, only two came to the final match, to decide the Cup: Brazil and France. The French deserve their party. But it is no reason for crying, or at least – for God's sake! – let it not be reason for harsh, crazy, hallucinated, distempered criticisms against the Brazilian team. The French celebrate. It is a sport, one can win, one can lose. If you take 1950 out, when it was just a tournament, when we came there with Uruguay, with chance to decide, after that, Brazil came to five finals, won four, is facing defeat for the first time on a final match, and the defeat sometimes brings a lot of teaching. Make your party, French, you deserve it. For the Brazilian team, we would have to say: [pause] It has worth it, Brazil, it has worth it! [starts a VT previously edited for transmission on the (remote) case of a defeat. The images show scenes from previous winning campaigns of the Brazilian team on World Cups, and in the end, scenes from an amateur game, played by poor youngsters, with a masculine speech in off] Speech: it has worth it, Brazil! The image that remains of our football is that: after all, we are the best of the century. We will always be the football country. Ball ahead!

Globo is more Brazil!²⁷

27 Final de jogo no Stade de France! 3 para a França, zero para a seleção brasileira. E acaba sendo – vejamos só como são as coisas, e como o destino acaba agindo: é a maior derrota brasileira na história de uma Copa do Mundo, uma derrota por três gols. Esse gol do Petit no instante final, a maior derrota brasileira – Zagallo vai cumprimentar o Aimé Jacquet: Bonito, Zagallo! Hoje um jornal francês estampava em manchete: “Zagallo, um gigante do futebol”, no jornal L'Equipe. E ele tem uma atitude grande ao ir abraçar o Aimé Jacquet. Termina o sonho do penta para Zagallo, termina pros jogadores, termina pra todos nós. Mas tem uma atitude digna, o Zagallo. Tá ali, a expressão firme, as lágrimas querem cair dos olhos, é claro, como as minhas também querem, como as suas, aí no Brasil. Ronaldinho, você não tinha realmente a condição física. E a França, acima de tudo, merece sua festa. E o que não era pra ser mesmo, pelo que foi mostrado em campo pelo futebol brasileiro. Talvez possa até mesmo ter faltado mais audácia, certamente nos faltou um pouco de inteligência, nos faltou nesse dia mais detalhes técnicos... mais futebol. A França comemora, o sonho do penta fica adiado, quem sabe ele vem em 2002. Pode sim, vir em 2002, mas só o Brasil é tetra. Nós queríamos o penta, ninguém pode chegar ao tetra nesse século, no final, no final deste milênio. Duas coisas eu acho que têm que ser ditas realmente, e ditas de forma muito clara. Tá ali o Rivaldo; Cafu, você foi um gigante, Cafu, você foi um gigante a Copa do Mundo inteira, Cafu. Júnior Baiano viveu no céu, viveu no inferno. Falhou, salvou, às vezes falhou mais do que salvou, às vezes salvou mais do que falhou. Edmundo entrou com vontade, todos eles, todos eles realmente brigaram. Mas a França faz a festa, vamos mostrar também a festa francesa. Tá a festa francesa, os jogadores se deitam, a festa francesa na prefeitura. Duas coisas acho que ficam claras, definitivas e absolutas. A França merece a festa que vai tomar conta da madrugada francesa, da cidade de Paris, de todas as cidades francesas. Vai faltar espaço pra francês fazer festa, porque a seleção francesa merece

It is easy to perceive the connection of Galvão Bueno's speech with the finishing point previously determined, the starting point for the videotape previously edited. Certainly, if Brazil had won, another VT would be ready to be released, with a different "finishing point" for Galvão's speech. When the speech in off talks about "the image that remains" refers also to the definition of reality, on the impression caused on the "others", the rest of the world's countries by "our" performance on a football field. The metonymical incorporation of the "Brazilian people" to the Brazilian players is evidenced when it is used the first person of the plural on the verb "to be": "we are" and "we will always be", a category-inclusive device. It is worth of noting in this speech the successive change of footing, due to the relation of the speaker with the images shown on the screen. Sometimes he addresses a Brazilian player; later, the French people, and finally, "you", the audience – the only "listener" he is actually addressing. Such changes of categorisation device create the impression of a dialogue between speaker and the "other" categorised on his speech, thus allowing him to attribute predicates to the members/categories addressed.

Luciano do Valle, in his speech, puts the football aside and points to the "maturity" of the supporters – another metonym for the Brazilian people – towards an evolution to what he calls "a new Brazil":

The Brazilian supporters have shown a model of behaviour, showing that the Brazilians get every day more mature. It is a new Brazil. In every reaction, it is a new Brazil. I hope that in our country we all have calm enough to understand, to keep cool, to always win is impossible, and that in this very honourable defeats, because after all we came to the World Cup final, here arrived 32 teams and only

realmente – aí o galo, símbolo francês da... – merece realmente a festa. Juntando tudo, foi a seleção que melhor se comportou. Tomou só dois gols nessa Copa do Mundo e soube conquistá-la. O Brasil pode ter faltado aqui inteligência aqui, audácia ali, definição aqui. Foi forte, foi valente o time brasileiro, chegou à final. 32 seleções começaram, apenas duas chegaram pra decidir o título: Brasil e França. Vale a festa dos franceses. Mas não é motivo pra choro, ou pelo menos – pelo amor de Deus! – que não seja motivo pra críticas rasgadas, desvairadas, alucinadas e destemperadas pra cima da seleção brasileira. Os franceses fazem a festa. É um esporte, se ganha, se perde. Tira 50, quando era um torneio, que chegamos ali com o Uruguai em chance de decidir, depois disso, o Brasil foi a cinco finais, ganhou quatro, conhece a derrota pela primeira vez numa final, e a derrota às vezes traz muito ensinamento. Façam festa, franceses, vocês merecem. Pra seleção brasileira, a gente teria que dizer: [pausa] Valeu, Brasil, valeu! [entra em cena um VT previamente editado para veiculação em caso de derrota. As imagens mostram cenas das campanhas vitoriosas do Brasil em Copas do Mundo, e no final, cenas de um jogo de futebol de várzea] *Locução*: Valeu, Brasil! A imagem que fica do nosso futebol é essa: afinal, somos os melhores do século. Seremos sempre o país do futebol. Bola pra frente! A Globo é mais Brasil!

two came to the final and in those two there was Brazil, amongst these two there was Brazil. So, that's what we got to have, a cool head, in its place, because what really counts is the gesture, comprehension and sporting attitude.²⁸

It can be noted on this speech the motive of the honour, assured that it was not lost, as well as the appeal to the so-called “sporting spirit”, an appeal to the rationality to keep the serenity in face of the defeat, when he talks of “comprehension” and on a head “cool and in its place” This appeal to rationality – in this case, some sort of antithesis of “passion” – as well as the assertive definition that the “national honour” was not affected, along with the claim on the “sporting spirit” are also present on the speech by Juarez Soares, from the *SBT*, that tries to de-predicate the Brazilian team from the symbolic attributes of nationality, treating it just as an ordinary “football team”, rationalizing the defeat by such means:

The Brazilian team lose. To lose a football match, a World Cup is a reason for sorrow for any country, and even more for our country, that is The Football Country. But it is not a reason for a catastrophe, for life and death. I am one of those who share the idea that a world football championship is not the nation wearing football shoes. It is just a championship, where one can win, draw or lose. In this championship, Brazil has lost two matches, draw one and won the others. (...) If we consider that a vice-championship is honorable for any national team, the second place is a worthy position for the Brazilian team, why not? We Brazilians are not used to that, but I think that this World Cup has shown that we need to get used to know that being the second place is always a motive of honour, evidently. (...) This message, if it were allowed to me, on this talk, more than a message for the Brazilian supporters, is just to say it: there is no reason for despair, there were no earthquake, were it? Our nationality, our brazilian-ness were not affected in absolutely any way. The World Cup is a World Cup of s-p-o-r-t, in which Brazil finished on second place and that's all.²⁹

28 A torcida brasileira num comportamento exemplar, mostrando que o brasileiro amadurece a cada dia que passa. É um novo Brasil. Em todas as reações, é um novo Brasil. Espero que no nosso país a gente tenha calma suficiente para entender, pra esfriar a cabeça, que ganhar sempre é impossível, e nessas derrotas muito honrosas, porque afinal de contas chegamos à final da Copa, aqui passaram 32 seleções e só duas chegaram à final e nessas duas estava o Brasil, entre as duas estava o Brasil. Então é isso que a gente tem que ter, cabeça fria, no lugar, porque o que vale é o gesto, a compreensão e o lado esportivo.

29 O Brasil perdeu. Perder um jogo de futebol, uma Copa do Mundo é motivo de tristeza para qualquer país, ainda mais o país nosso, que é o país do futebol. Mas não é motivo de catástrofe, de vida e morte. Eu sou daqueles que participa da idéia de que o Campeonato Mundial de Futebol e o futebol não é a

Luiz Alfredo, the *Record* network speaker, choose to make from the praise of France the subject of his speech, in which he relates in a straight way the football to the very essence of nationality – completely opposite to Juarez Soares’ reasoning:

France have a thousand years of difference in relation to Brazil. We are a young country, we need to build up Brazil a lot, on the basis of freedom, equality and fraternity. Not only in the World Cup, not only in the World Cup, we have the means to do so. (...) They had the humbleness of learning football with us, we must have the humbleness of learning with them how to be a great nation, and we shall be.³⁰

Paulo Stein, from *Rede Manchete*, has used the praising of the educational and moral aspects of the “enchanted world” of sport and its relation with the human condition as the core of his speech. Exalting the integration of differences promoted by the World Cup, as well as avoiding to say a word about the just-finished match and the Brazilian team, his strategy was to change the subject...

A sentence that is part of the history for every sport, sportsmen of the whole world, by the Baron Pierre de Coubertin, creator of the modern Olympic Games: the important is to compete”. No, this sentence is important, but it lays on the past. The important is to win, in life, the important is to win. The sport also shows and directs us toward that. It is an enchanted world, that teach us how to win and how to lose. That makes men more comprehensive, that turns men more into a human being, that makes men more focused on within, more

pátria de chuteiras. É um campeonato, onde se ganha, se perde e se empata. O Brasil nesse campeonato perdeu duas partidas, empatou uma e ganhou as outras. (...) Se nós considerarmos que um vice-campeonato é honroso para qualquer seleção, o segundo lugar é uma posição digna para a seleção brasileira, porque não? Nós, brasileiros, é que não estamos acostumados com isso, mas eu acho que esta Copa mostrou que a gente precisa se acostumar de saber que chegar em segundo lugar sempre é um motivo de honra, evidentemente. (...) Essa mensagem, se me fosse permitido, nessa conversa, mais do que uma mensagem para a torcida brasileira, é dizer isso: não há nenhum motivo para desespero, não houve nenhum terremoto, né, a nossa nacionalidade, a nossa brasilidade não foi afetada em absolutamente nada. O Campeonato Mundial é um campeonato mundial de es-por-te, onde o Brasil chegou em segundo lugar e ponto final.

30 A França tem mais de mil anos de diferença em relação ao Brasil, nós somos um país jovem, nós precisamos construir muito o Brasil, na base da liberdade, da igualdade e da fraternidade. Não só na Copa do Mundo, não só na Copa do Mundo, a gente tem capacidade pra isso. (...) Eles tiveram a humildade de aprender futebol com a gente, nós temos que ter a humildade de aprender com eles a sermos uma grande nação, e nós vamos ser.

focused on the behaviour of mankind. And the intertwining of ideologies, of races, of religions, we even have seen, in this World Cup, the match of United States against Iran, who would say that? Only sport can do it. To put together in a friendly situation, inside a playing field, opponents of religions, of ideas and find in such acquaintance an immense joy.³¹

The strategy Stein uses to account for defeat departs from the Olympic motto of the Baron de Coubertin to categorise what had just happen as part of a different order, apart from everyday experience. The sports, “enchanted world”, like theatre or dreams, in this sense, can be considered a “finite province of meaning”, according to the expression of Schutz (1962), or what Goffman (1986) would categorise as a “primary framework”. Such speech tries to “console” the audience by demonstrating the triviality of the recent defeat when it is seen “out of its frame”, from the heights of the “enchanted world” of sport, praiseworthy and altruist, that “humanizes” mankind, and that such ludic activity with a different “other” can be a source of “immense joy”. Now, under such an Olympic point of view, what are mere 3 x 0?

Conclusion

The analysis of the data provided from the discourse of the speakers and commentators points out to some directions about their accounting for the facts of the game. In first place, the evident partiality – even assumed – of such discourse, that makes it far from the canons of the so-called “journalistic neutrality”. In second place, the motivation and the claimed favourite status of the Brazilian team for this match were largely built by the media, wishing – as usual – to optimise the audience rating, that converts automatically into profit for the networks. During the match, however, the discourses were passing from an absolute confidence to reserve and resignation on the end of

31 Uma frase que fica na história pra todo desportismo, desportistas do mundo inteiro, do Barão Pierre de Coubertin, criador dos Jogos Olímpicos modernos: “o importante é competir”. Não, essa frase é importante, mas ela já ficou no passado. O importante é vencer, na vida, o importante é vencer. O esporte também mostra e nos orienta pra isso. É um mundo encantado, que nos ensina a ganhar e nos ensina a perder. Que torna o homem mais compreensivo, que torna o homem mais ser humano, que torna o homem mais voltado pra dentro de si, mais voltado pro comportamento da humanidade. É o entrelaçamento de ideologias, de raças, de religiões, nós vimos mesmo, nesta Copa do Mundo, o confronto entre Estados Unidos e Irã, quem diria? Só o esporte é capaz disso. De colocar amistosamente, dentro do campo, dentro de uma quadra, antagonistas de religiões, de idéias e encontrar nesse convívio uma imensa alegria.

the match. It is to note that in any moment any of the discourses had slid into blaming, except in pointing a player considered wrong in a given moment, but during the game the discourses never accused the Brazilian team or the coach Zagallo – during the match, at least; afterwards, no one was spared. After all, the whole press were compromised with their comments after the match against Holland, after which Zagallo were incensed, and the players, idolized. A few hours later, it is worth of notice, nobody on the Brazilian team were left unblamed by the media – mainly Zagallo.

After the ignominious defeat, the worst ever, what had rest for the speakers transmitting live the disastrous match was the self-imposed duty of “console” the audience. The main arguments used for such “consolation” related mainly on the matter of the “national honour”, that – they warranted – were not affected, using words like “respect”, “brazilian-ness” and “honourable defeat”. Such argumentation can be related to an often established relation between the Brazilian team and Brazil itself, being the football team seen as a metonym of the nation, another frequent motive present on the analysed speeches. Such positions refer to a national project in constant evolution, represented by the Brazilian football, referred, as for example, when a speaker talks of a “new Brazil” or on learning “how to be a great nation”. The passionate dimension of nationality, that in another argumentation is represented by the football, must be denied, keeping the “national” apart of what is just a “mere play”. In this meaning, the speaker appeals to the rationality as the possibility of getting apart from the suffering, denying the affective involvement with the sport, the passion of the game, when it is said to “cool the head out” “keep the head on its place” and in “comprehension”. The same with the denial of the magic of the game: after all, it is just a football game, a championship of s-p-o-r-t, with every character widely apart, as a way to make it clear. Another line of argument is the one that appeals to the “sporting spirit”. According to the noble ideals of personal disinterest – as those “Olympic” ideals of the *Baron de Coubertin* – one must play loyally, be humble on victory and serene on the defeat: after all, “the important is to compete”. Such “Olympic” logic “consoles” since it puts apart the recent event, source of suffering, posing it in perspective with more “noble” things, such as the “mankind” and the “intertwining of races, ideologies and religions” promoted by the sport. Finally, the great console: we are “the best of the century”. It is interesting to note that the organization of the football as we know it today

has happened a little longer than a century, and that the World Cup – tournament that allows to “evidence” such affirmative – was first disputed in 1930. Under such perspective, to be the “best of the century” means to be “the best ever”. Thanks to the title of 1994, the Brazilian supporters were saved from the ultimate humiliation: to be overcome on the number of World Cup titles. An advertisement released on the day after the final match affirms, in this sense: “*It’s Alright. Nobody is ‘tetra’ yet.*” The title obtained on 1994 was actually the great console, the ultimate reserve of the frail Brazilian self-esteem manifest on the analysed speeches.

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