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## Identity in Sport Teams

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### ABSTRACT

In this paper we analyze identity in a soccer team using a discursive perspective, in which individual psychological functioning is considered to be built in and through social interactions within groups. Analysis is based on naturally-occurring interactions that were audio recorded during technical meetings before and after the match. The data were collected within an ethnographic investigation of an Italian soccer team carried out over a two-month period. The results show that the team's members made rhetorical use of a complex repertoire of their own and others' social identities, and that two main variables influenced the use of social identity markers: a) the role of the speakers (in particular the "power" role of the coach); b) the result of the match around which the interactive discourse revolved. Against this background, we discuss how narratives and identity positionings were used to achieve specific goals and to perform specific actions, such as the planning of future matches and the interpretation of victories and defeats.

### KEYWORDS

identity, sport teams, narratives

### Cite this paper

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