

SPORTS LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

INTRODUCTORY WORD

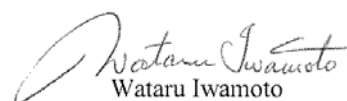
The preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity is vital, both for society and for the individual. Language is considered to be one of the most important aspects of human cultural heritage and communication, defining a civilization. From its inception in 1948, UNESCO has placed particular emphasis on this significant part of world wide culture due to its vulnerability as a non-static entity.

Nowadays, sport plays an increasingly visible role in the development of humankind. At the same time, sport produces its own language, or rather languages, according to diverse ethnic traditions and different sports dialects, subdivided into the languages of athletes and their jargon, the language of the media and, in particular, sport science, like sports medicine, psychology, sociology and so forth.

One of the most interesting and culturally valuable aspects of sports language lies in traditional sports with all their regional and local varieties, encompassing a vast amount of cultural material. Meanwhile, sports terminology, phraseology and stylistics fall prey to quick development and changes, and much of its earlier forms disappear due to the evolutionary nature of sport itself.

The wealth of cultural material associated with sport should be better known and preserved as an important part of human culture and heritage. Despite the value of this work in the field of scientific research, there has been no real coordinated effort to initiate the preservation and research of this unusually rich reservoir of human dialect for global dissemination. Previously, linguists, with some minor exceptions, have overlooked sport in their research, while sports specialists have not sufficiently appreciated language as an important tool of communication requiring a philological approach. As a result, sports language has remained in the shadows.

This initiative, undertaken by Prof Wojciech Lipoński, to edit and publish a special volume of papers on the subject of sports language and linguistics marks an important step forward. Although this publication cannot exhaust all aspects of the topic, it instigates a vital academic dialogue which will feed into the preservation and promotion of these regional sports dialects as part of human heritage in the future. The language of sport as a world-wide phenomenon is too important to neglect. It is an intrinsic part of our cultural heritage and must be preserved and understood as such in our struggle to promote and protect all aspects of humanity through education, social and natural science, culture and communication.



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