

Sprache und Fußball im Blickpunkt linguistischer Forschung

Janusz Taborek, Artur Tworek & Lech Zieliński (eds.)

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The 2012 European Football Championships were a long awaited high-rank sports event that took place in Poland and Ukraine. The Euro brought successful investments that improved the quality of various branches of industry, transportation, economic integrity and a wide array of social infrastructure. The book under review was written by the younger generation of linguists representing several universities in Poland and abroad. It documents the growing popularity of studies into the broadly understood culture of sports. This trend is highly promising as it can inspire further research and interest in this area both in Poland and abroad.

Modern sport (not to everyone's liking) carries a wide and diverse variety of issues, including linguistic aspects. Their significance is growing due to the global popularity of sport and the media coverage that stimulates it. The commercialization of sports is an important factor as well, as it makes sport very profitable for all those who take part in it. High-level professional sports have always been spectacular events, and now in the times of progressing globalisation sport has clearly become a commodity, easily subjected to marketing.

It is praiseworthy that in Poland – much like in any other modern countries – the issues of sports are reflected in advanced studies and scientific publications, many of which have been undertaken by young scholars.

The above thoughts are not limited to strictly linguistic pursuits. Sport is closely tied not only to fields such as medicine, but also other aspects of life, commonly regulated by law. Between May 10 and 13, 2012 a conference took place in Poznań on legal issues in football. These issues are quite prominent among the Poznań legal community. Prof. Andrzej Szwarc established the Polish Sport Law Association in Poznań in 1990. The May conference was the 15th conference that dealt with these problems. The conference programme included themes both current and controversial, i.e. stadium bans, legal issues related to televised games, and transfer management. Prof. Szwarc announced an upcoming volume of conference proceedings to be published in three languages: Polish, English and German.

The publication under review is a result of an international research project, whose participants studied the language of sports, including football, taking different approaches (meta-lexicographical, lexico-logical, contrastive). The publishers of the volume wanted to use the opportunity

of Euro 2012 in Poland and Ukraine to effectively promote their research perspectives.

The volume contains 10 articles tackling different aspects of the language of football. The papers by Armin Burchardt and Ryszard Lipczuk review the historical aspects and the future trends in the language of football in Germany and Poland.

The reactions to this relatively new area of sport studies in Germany cannot always be classified as positive and are at times shocking. The reader and the sports fan today can find it surprising or maybe amusing that Karl Planck, a professor of gymnastics, wrote a pasquinade in which he compared a football player to a monkey, and claimed that football was an emanation of a dangerous mania of accepting foreign models. Konrad Koch was said to be the one who "cleansed" the German language of English-sounding terms and replaced them with German ones. For him a very important aspect was the morphological transparency of the language. It was then when the metaphor of war and combat came into prominence, but it is not the only source of metaphors.

Marcin Lewandowski systematically studied the attitude towards English borrowings in Polish and German. In his interesting paper he specifies various non-violent approaches to the subject of football matches and the art of football. Lewandowski analyses in his text (written in English) metaphors in the Polish and English language of football. He proves that there are numerous sources of these borrowings that are not related to the most popular semantic area of the military or combat, but are derived from multiple and sometimes rather unexpected areas of life. A game of football is treated as a theater play, school lesson, test or a culinary dish. The team should operate like a well working machine, a precisely engineered building, a work of art, sorcery, or like a sword. A match, like life in general, can be treated as a metaphor of a journey. The author claims that such elaborate metaphorical structures aim at enlivening the language of football match reporting and increase the reader's involvement.

Other articles analyse other aspects of the language of football, such as conveying the emotional state of a reporter or a commentator (i.e. Reportsprache), ways of conveying epistemic modality and word connections. The emotional states of the recipients are the focus of the paper by Łukasz

Jasiński who analyses the contemporary language of football fans in comments on various websites.

Janusz Taborek takes the meta-lexicographical approach to the language of football. The author of a very important bilingual Polish-German football dictionary (the first of its kind in Polish lexicography!) analyses in his paper multilingual dictionaries of football terminology. Without a shadow of a doubt, it is a task that requires broad knowledge and exceptional competence. Taborek gives interesting examples of 'faux amis' in German, Polish and Russian. He concludes that the multilingual and international dimension of football creates a significant challenge for translators and lexicographers as well as for coaches and players themselves. In the wake of current medialisation of football and the expansion of sport culture, not only in the mass media, we can expect that the interest in the cultural and linguistic aspects of sport will continue to rise.

Hopefully, this highly interesting collection of papers will be an impulse for further research into the language of sport

and will attract the interest of not only linguists and sociologists but also of a wider range of specialists and fans of other sport disciplines. It is well-known that sport is not only a form of combat, but more importantly a forge of character and a school of life that promotes fair and friendly rivalry and acknowledgment of the rival's or friend's superiority on the field or the track. Many sport associations or clubs also promote important humanistic and patriotic values that can easily supplant racism and chauvinism. As a tribute to the days spent celebrating the joy and emotions of sport during the European Football Championships of 2012, those aims should encompass the scientific exploration of the language and culture of sport and the language that describes it.

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