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The Aesthetics, Poetics, and Rhetoric of Soccer

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Chapter 12

Multilingualism in football teams

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Introduction and research overview[1]

International football teams can be seen as complex linguistic ecosystems in which players and coaches with different mother tongues and cultural backgrounds interact with each other. In particular, mixed international teams with large numbers of foreign players might seem likely to encounter problems caused by language and communication barriers. Despite such linguistic (and cultural) barriers, effective communication within the team is vital for efficient and goal-oriented interaction and cooperation at all times. The Innsbruck Football Research Group[2] at the University of Innsbruck's Faculty of Humanities, has been working on elucidating the issue of multilingualism in football since 2006,[3] starting with the edited volume *The Linguistics of Football* (Lavric et al., 2008) and continuing with a series of other publications,[4] including the *Football and Language Bibliography Online*,[5] and most recently, the organization of the international workshop "Multilingual and multifaceted football," which took place in Innsbruck on June 10, 2016. In this chapter, we want to show the complexity and the beauty of the use of different languages in the realm of football.

To illustrate the relevance of multilingualism in football, let us give three examples where foreign language skills or the lack thereof worked as an asset or as a drawback: Our first example is the German coach Otto Rehhagel, who won the 2004 European Championship with the Greek national team. Since Rehhagel did not speak a word of Greek, this success is at least partly credited to his brilliant interpreter Ioannis Topalidis (see Ehrmann, 2012). Second example: When Pep Guardiola took over Bayern Munich, he spent half a year learning German intensively in order to be able to give his first press conference in the very language of the club (see Bundesliga, 2013). The third example occurred in the semi-finals of the 2002 Champions League, when Bayer 04 Leverkusen was playing against Manchester United. Manchester United was attacking the Leverkusen goal, and goalkeeper Jörg Butt shouted in German at Diego Placente, a

newly arrived defender from Argentina, that he should stay on the line. Placente had already received some language training and understood what he was asked to do. He thus stayed on the line and was able to intercept the arriving ball. This scene was decisive for Bayer 04 Leverkusen winning the game and moving on to the Champions League final. "This prevented goal was worth the equivalent of 50 years of language training," Frank Ditgens later commented (interview Ditgens 2016). These are three examples that show how language matters in football—and how research about multilingualism in football teams can provide us with essential insights into how communication on and off the pitch actually works.

From the perspective of a 'linguistics of professional multilingualism', football is first and foremost a multilingual workplace like many others: Just as for political scientists, foreign players are first and foremost a special case of migrant workers (see Liegl and Spitaler, 2008). But football teams are a special kind of multilingual workplace, because their primary interest does certainly not lie in language or verbal interaction. To quote the title of the only relevant study preceding the work of the Innsbruck Football Research Group: "Feet speak louder than the tongue" (Kellermann et al., 2006). A football player will be recruited on account of their motor skills, their tactical abilities, and their cooperative competence, but hardly ever on account of their language competences. And yet, if they play in foreign clubs, they will have to communicate verbally, over time, in different linguistic environments. This also applies to the coach, as well as to international referees.

The fundamental problem in the football-and-languages context might simply be time spans: football with its frequent transfers is much more fast-moving than what would be required for a normal language learning process, and—in contrast to what happens e.g., in business—this problem is not compensated for by a language-focused recruiting policy.

This opens up a vast field for research about multilingualism in football teams, which can shed new light on the well-known 'beautiful game'. We will offer evidence to show that feet *do not* always speak louder than the tongue.

Eleven theses on multilingualism in football

In this section, we will summarize the outcome of our research in a collection of *11* theses. The results that will be presented stem from two Innsbruck project seminars about "Multilingualism in football" (2009 and 2016), where students of Romance linguistics carried out empirical research under supervision of Eva Lavric. The majority of investigations was conducted by means of qualitative interviews, often complemented by field notes and video recordings.[6] These results offer a broad-base study of

This means that the players speak Basque to manifest their complicity through insider comments in order to destabilize the opponent (this is what is called the 'cryptic function' of language choices). It is also reported that in Austria, clubs from the Vorarlberg region, where a rather unusual Alemannic dialect is spoken, use this code in a similar way.

Better language skills are important for well-being and integration, and many players make it a personal goal

It seems to be true that a football player can operate on the pitch very well with much reduced skills in the language of their club. But this does not mean that all players are unwilling to learn languages and confine themselves to that strict minimum. In fact, many are highly motivated to learn the new language as well as they can. Therefore, they often engage in self-study, develop a remarkable degree of ambition and strive for accuracy, and are neither afraid of talking freely without thinking twice nor to start anew in each new country. Consequently, many of them acquire a remarkable repertoire of foreign language skills in the course of their professional life (see Soccer Training Info, 2016).

A good example of such a language enthusiast is former Brazilian international Zé Elias, who played mid-field at SCR Altach during the 2008–2009 season just before he retired and who, in the course of his football life, has learned Italian, Spanish, Greek, and German. He had the following to say about language learning:

> I have to do everything in order to learn German. I cannot change the country. So, the quicker I understand the language, the better it is. It is really important. That's something I like. In my view, it is very important to make all possible efforts in order to learn the language quickly. … For me it is easy to acquire new language skills, because I learned in Germany that one has to listen very carefully. As soon as you are able to listen carefully, you can also start talking. I possess one very important quality: I'm not afraid to speak. For me, learning to speak is very important, because that way people are able to correct me and to help me.
>
> (Interview Zé Elias)

Language learning also has to happen alongside culture learning, getting to know and fitting into the new culture. A positive example in this respect is Guido Buchwald, former German international and former coach of Alemannia Aachen, who spent seven years in Japan with his family (at Urawa Reds) and who succeeded very well in integrating himself (see Okuma, 2007). Other remarkable examples are the Slovak Martin Petráš who played for US Triestina from 2007 to 2009 before moving on to play for other Italian teams and who raises his son to be bilingual, and Samir Occhial, a young Nepalese talent in AC Milan's youth team, who took cultural integration to such a level that he switched from Hinduism to Christianity (interview Krassimirov).

Good language skills are indeed decisive for a person's well-being and long-term satisfaction as the following quote by coach Heinz Peischl (former assistant coach of the Austrian national team) shows:

> Alas, I have to say that most clubs do not care about the integration of their foreign players. They see the player as a commodity which has to function from the beginning, and are not aware of the fact that performance is related to well-being. … It is logical that a person coming into a new country from abroad needs help and support. They need someone to help them with the administrative procedures and to find a suitable social environment where they are fully accepted. … Foreign players certainly need a few months in order to feel comfortable in the new country, and the more support they get, the quicker they can settle in and can deliver their sportive performance. This is something clubs still have to learn.
>
> (Interview Peischl)

A more in-depth knowledge of language and culture that goes beyond what is necessary on the pitch thus plays an important role in the integration into the new environment, especially when it comes to organizing private or family matters.

Good clubs will provide newly arrived players with interpreters or, more often, with personal assistants helping them in the beginning

Such a level of individual support financed by the club is unfortunately too expensive for lower league teams, but the higher league clubs can afford hiring an interpreter, or, actually, a personal assistant, for each player or group of players with a new foreign language. Bayern Munich, for instance, did so at the arrival of Luca Toni, as did Bayer 04 Leverkusen at the arrival of Renato Augusto from Brazil and of Theofanis Gekas from Greece, as did Wacker Innsbruck when they hired their first Brazilian player Fabiano. This special category of staff members does not necessarily have to consist of professional interpreters; their function is to take care of the newcomer in a variety of ways: linguistically, e.g., during meetings with the coach and the management, but also administratively and personally, such as helping to find a flat, buy a car, or choose a school for the children.[17]

The club with the highest degree of linguistic awareness in the German language area seems to be Bayer 04 Leverkusen, which has been systematically implementing this concept of individual assistance for a couple of years (combined, though, with language classes, see the section "Language courses are not very popular, but some clubs promote them very much," below):

> [This club] has hired … graduates of Cologne sports university, who developed a 'support system' as yet unrivalled. From the small worries of everyday life (furniture, car, household appliances) to the compulsory language course, everything has been thought of. … Top priority is [given to] the non-stop availability of the assistants.
>
> (Wulzinger, 2002)

In many clubs, it is not a specially hired interpreter or a personal assistant but a club manager or a former player who takes over the function of facilitating the newcomers' integration into the new club and the new environment. One example is the Swiss Jörg Stiel, former goalkeeper and physical therapist at Borussia Mönchengladbach, who is fluent in French, Italian, and Spanish and could thus act as a linguistic and general assistant to Venezuelan player Juan Arango as well as Argentinian striker Raúl Bobadilla. Another example is Marco Cernaz, former long-term manager at US Triestina, who, apart from his mother tongue Italian, also speaks Spanish, Romanian, English, and German and thus became a translator, a confidant, and a cultural bridge builder for Austrian player Marko Stanković and for many others.

This kind of solution, however, even though it looks very practical, seems to have one disadvantage in particular, that is, it might lead to linguistic laziness. This becomes evident in the example of Zé Elias, who used to be completely dependent on his personal assistant—until the latter went away and the player realized how lost he was in the foreign environment. It was only then that he decided he had to learn the host country's language:

> In Germany, what happened was that I had been there for three months already and did not speak English. My friend and translator went back to Brazil. … I spent one month more there, and in that time I had to order in the restaurant using the menu and felt like a child of four or five, as I had to point to the dishes and say, I want this, I want that. At that moment I realized that I had to learn the language as quickly as possible.
>
> (Interview Zé Elias)

Apart from the club manager or the personal assistant or interpreter, there is yet another solution which many clubs tend to apply—it is in some ways ideal but not always possible.

The most frequent method of integration is translation by a team mate who speaks the same mother tongue

It is evident that the trick with the team mate as interpreter can only function if there really *is* a player that has the required language skills, i.e., the same mother tongue and mastery of the local language due to a longer stay in the club's country.

In translation studies, this is known as 'community interpreting', i.e., interpreting by non-professionals, often in immigration or social work settings, where the interpreter does not only translate but also takes the newcomer under their wings in some way.[18] The team mate with the same mother tongue acts as a facilitator not only in linguistic but also in cultural terms. This is an ideal solution for the club, as it is cost-effective and the fellow player-interpreter will be engaging with the player off and on the field. Furthermore, they are well acquainted with everything, know the context, and will certainly give the correct translation (even if they do not master the local language perfectly). However, Masaki Morass, an international coach who worked in Austria and in Japan, pointed out that one should not forget about the competition between different players in today's football teams (interview Morass 2016). This might result in the translating team mate not being always content with the position of the interpreter, particularly if the newcomer plays in the same position.

Even if, from time to time, clubs venture a bold step by employing their very first Korean, French, Czech, or Latin American player, the presence of another player with a certain mother tongue is an argument that is definitely taken into account when it comes to planning new acquisitions at a club. This kind of language policy certainly has a positive effect on the well-being of the two or three compatriots playing in the team (although it may not be ideal for their motivation to learn the local language). In this context, we want to emphasize the role of long-serving language enthusiasts among the foreign players, who can rely on a large number of years in the same language area and are thus well-integrated. They act as contact persons for new generations of fellow countrymen. This was the case e.g., at Borussia Dortmund with the Brazilian veteran Leonardo di Deus Santos (called "Dedê"), who supplied his newly arrived compatriots not only with linguistic help, but even offered accommodation in his house, which was jokingly referred to as "die WG" [the shared flat]. Another good example to illustrate this kind of community interpreting in football is the Andorran defender Ildefons Lima Solà, formerly at US Triestina. He has a special talent for languages and speaks Spanish, Italian, Greek, and English—and for years, he used to be the integration aide for all new players at Triestina, whether they came from Uruguay, Ireland or elsewhere.

It is not even necessary that the aide and the newcomer share exactly the same language, as thanks to intercomprehension related languages

(Spanish/Portuguese, or Spanish/Italian, or different Slavic languages, especially the languages of the former Yugoslavia[19]) may also be useful for this type of team-internal community interpreting.

Language courses are not very popular, but some clubs promote them very much

We heard many similar reports about players being sent to language classes by their clubs or of a club organizing such a class for its foreign players.[20] These classes, however, seemed to have received very little acceptance among the players and consequently these players lacked the motivation to learn the local language. The main reason players give for this lack of motivation is tiredness; after a demanding training session, there is not much energy and time left to devote to language learning. This lack of motivation for language learning might be due to the fact that very basic skills are sufficient in order to function pretty well on the pitch. Players also struggle with the general character of many language courses, which usually fail to adapt to the professional needs of footballers.[21]

There is one program in the German speaking area that tries to remedy this deficiency, called "Deutsch für Ballkünstler" [German for ball artists] developed by Uwe Wiemann. It is a milestone in didactics for foreign players,[22] as it is the first language course book—in any language—ever developed specifically for football players.[23] Wiemann collaborated with the German Bundesliga club Bayer 04 Leverkusen, which is known to be one of the most language-sensitive clubs and one of the very few that have actually developed a consistent language policy. This means that all foreign players are obliged to learn the local language, and that they are offered optimal conditions for doing so.

Language learning is specifically advocated in many clubs' youth academies, e.g., at Manchester United, where all players—which come from very different backgrounds—have to learn English. The same goes for AC Milan's youth academy, where not only Italian, but also English and French are taught regularly. The prime example of a club with a successful youth development system, not only with respect to languages, is FC Barcelona (interview Díaz 2016). The club is very proud of recruiting a considerable part of its players from its own youth academy. This does not mean that the team has mainly regional roots, as the youth academy itself is already very international (31% Catalans, 31% Spanish, 38% international). The common language in the youth academy as well as in the club is Spanish—which means that FC Barcelona has a language policy that does not insist on their regional identity, but prefers the language of the country to the language of the region—most likely in view of their international players. Each player in the youth academy gets their own individually tailored language courses; and even the coaches and the rest of

the staff are offered the possibility to develop their language skills. This policy guarantees the best and quickest possible integration of the young talents.

A club that fosters the language competences of its players ultimately acts in its own best interest. There is, in fact, an undeniable relationship between language skills, integration, and well-being, and from this insight it is only a small step to the quality of the player's performance during the game. As an example, there is AC Milan's former Brazilian goalkeeper Dida (Nélson de Jesus Silva), whom the club had to force to finally learn Italian:

> When Dida came to the club, he spoke no Italian at all and he had communication problems with his fellow players. He did not feel good and his performance was bad. As soon as he learned the language, his performance became much better and he ended up producing very good results.
>
> (Interview Manzoni 2009)

Frank Ditgens, who, for many years, has been holding the position of a 'coordinator for foreign players' at Bayer 04 Leverkusen,[24] boldly addresses this link between language skills and playing performance, underlining the clear advantages for the club:

> If a player speaks [German], he will be a better player. This increases his value. It worked for Jorginho, Emerson, Paulo Sergio, Zé Roberto and lately Lucio. When Bayer 04 Leverkusen transferred these players, either abroad or to Bayern Munich, we made money.
>
> (Repplinger, 2005)

Language, however, is only one part of a package that also includes culture and local playing style, as Massimo Cosentino, Secretary General of UC Sampdoria affirms during the interview. Being asked whether a foreign player can be sold at a higher price to another Italian club after learning the Italian language in Genoa, he answered:

> Yes. This happens, however, not really because he has learned Italian, but because he has already played one season in Italy and therefore he knows not only the language and the Italian way of playing, but also the culture, habits, and traditions.
>
> (Interview Cosentino 2014)

This shows the important things a player learns during their first time in a new team and country. It seems that a club's functioning language and integration policy, together with the individual players' efforts to integrate and adapt themselves, pay off in the end.

The amount of language a player needs will depend on his playing position on the pitch

This is a new, but not unexpected finding of our study: Players need different amounts of verbal interaction to communicate efficiently on the pitch depending on their playing position. The offensive players, who account for a majority in our test group, seem to be the ones needing the least linguistic resources. Among those who communicate most are the goalkeepers, who have to make themselves understood in particular in standard situations, e.g., when they arrange the wall.[25] Midfield players also have high communicative needs, as it is them who have to link offense with defense and vice versa. Regarding the defenders, research in the 2016 project seminar showed that they have a similar amount of verbal communication as midfielders, apparently because they have a good overview of the whole game from the back. In general, we suggest that the relationship between playing position and verbal interaction needs further empirical research.

In any case, one thing seems to be clear: The captain in particular fulfils an important communicative task, especially in tricky situations such as conflicts with the referee—which means that in international teams the captain should at least speak English. This is confirmed by Jocelyn Blanchard, the former French captain of Austria Wien, who compares captaincy with managing a family and underlines the necessity for him to speak English as well as the team's local language. In a similar vein, Petr Voříšek, former Czech midfielder at SCR Altach, emphasizes the need for the captain to keep their calm and remain capable of acting (also linguistically) in very stressful situations.

It is clearly the coach who has the strongest language needs—and there are different ways of providing for them

Whereas players at a pinch can do without complex verbal communication about difficult subjects with some of their team mates, coaches are completely dependent on finding common linguistic and communicational grounds with each single player in their team. And, as we know, these teams are increasingly multilingual these days. In such a situation, basic language skills in at least some of the mother tongues of their players can be very helpful for the coach. Coaches will, of course, try to work with community interpreting, graphical means,[26] facial expressions, and gestures, as well as language mixing. However, the ideal type of contact still runs via the individual players' mother tongue. This means that the coach not only has to speak the language of the country in which they are working, but also a little bit of the languages of their players—and that they have to have good multilingual and multimodal communication

skills.[27] For instance, Dietmar Constantini, former coach of several Austrian Bundesliga teams and the Austrian national team, insisted on learning Spanish in order to communicate with some hispanophone players in his team (interview Constantini 2006).

The necessity to speak the language of the country they work in also has to do with the fact that coaches, no less than players, are likely to have an international career and change the country every couple of years. Just like the players, the coach will not be given any acclimatization period, instead they will have to show excellent results right from the beginning. Thus, the coach has to be operational, even if they are Central European and the working language of their team is, for instance, Arabic or Greek. In such cases, the club will usually appoint an interpreter. However, this interpreter, too, is faced with the nearly impossible task of translating not only the content of the coach's instructions, but also their enthusiasm and the psychological and motivational elements of a coach's speech, all of this in real time.[28] This is one of the reasons why in Greece Otto Rehhagel's interpreter Ioannis Topalidis is nearly as famous as Rehhagel himself.

A coach who takes communication with the team seriously will try to learn the basics of the new language as quickly as possible in order not to be completely dependent on their interpreter. This will—in addition—earn them much respect and goodwill among the team.

Referees have to communicate smoothly with their colleagues. They need English, but maybe even more[29]

The average football spectator is certainly not aware of the area where the referee's real communication problems lie. We usually see them holding up the yellow or red card (i.e., practicing highly conventionalized nonverbal communication), or discussing with infuriated players (we may well wonder in which language the discussion unfolds). According to their own statements, the real communicative challenge for the referee arises within their own group. That is, for a referee it is not that important to understand what players are trying to tell them; what really counts is trouble-free communication with their assistant referees. To this end, Champions League matches, for example, are usually preceded by referee meetings, where some additional signs—beyond those conventionally prescribed—are agreed on within the group (interview Plautz 2007). Nevertheless, it seems that communication does not always flow smoothly. How else can the UEFA Champions League's fairly recent introduction of the rule that the entire referee team of a match has to come from the same country be explained? A revolutionary device in this respect was the introduction of the head set in 2006, giving the verbal communication in the referees' team a clear advantage over the nonverbal one.

The referee, however, does not only have to be able to communicate clearly with their colleagues and with the players on the pitch, but also with the public watching the game at the stadium and on TV. Egon Bereuter (together with Konrad Plautz one of the very few FIFA referees/referee assistants coming from Austria) points out that nonverbal communication will always remain important for the referee, because it is the only aspect of communication that the audience can perceive clearly. According to Bereuter, the referee has to "sell" their decisions and therefore their gestures have to be clearly visible to and identifiable for everybody.

Let us now address the question in which language the players, and especially the team captains, carry out discussions with the referee. At least in international games, this will usually take place in the universal lingua franca English, among other reasons because it plays the most significant role in referee-training.[30] This might, however, be short-sighted since most of the referees we interviewed told us that it is very useful to master more languages in order to be able to talk with the players. Some of the languages the referees mentioned as being very useful are above all Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian.

If you really feel the need to insult the referee, you had better choose a language they do not understand

We have just seen in the previous section that referees should actually be able to speak more than only English. For players, however, multilingual referees might not be such a good idea, since a player who, losing his temper in the heat of the moment,[31] insults the referee inevitably sees the red card—except in the case when the player chooses to insult the referee in a language the referee does not understand. Indeed, the referee has to note down in the match report what the player actually said to them, which, of course, they cannot do if they did not understand the words but only inferred the insult from tone and expression.

When asked about this issue, some referees told us that they regularly study lists of common insults in the respective languages before international games. A coach of a German lower league club catering predominantly towards Turkish migrants (see interview Yüksel 2016) even told us that he regularly warns his players not to recur to insults in Turkish, because the German referees have most certainly studied them beforehand. In this context, it is well known that a gesture is worth a thousand words and that players who lack the necessary language competence always find a way to convey their message—even though they might regret the success of that nonverbal insulting act in the end. Interestingly, gestures are not always as international as one might believe, and they, too, can give rise to misunderstandings as the following anecdote by Jocelyn Blanchard makes clear:

> I wanted to show the referee that I had been fouled at the head, with the gesture I would have used in my home country. … But he interpreted it as an Austrian gesture meaning "you are crazy" and showed me the red card.
>
> (Interview Blanchard)

Eleven players—one goal: team spirit and cooperation are crucial for success

With all its multiculturalism and multilingualism, a football team ultimately constitutes a group that has to stick together and show solidarity not only on the pitch, but also on a linguistic level in order to ensure successful communication. Hence the importance of community interpreting, mutual aid, and team spirit. Here is Tomáš Jun, with a fairly typical remark in this respect:

> Players have a common goal. If I explain/translate something to another player, he will help me in the field—he will know what to do, where to run, etc. If he does not know what to do, it will be more difficult for me in the field, too.
>
> (Interview Jun)

Thus, every player has a direct interest in the fact that their fellow players integrate quickly and well—also linguistically—into the new club. Only when its members truly work together, can a multilingual and multicultural team eventually be successful.

Summary and outlook

The football team and the pitch are not multilingual workplaces like so many others, they are a particularly interesting type of multilingual workplace. The two project seminars (2009 and 2016) conducted in Innsbruck showed that the mix of protagonists with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, together with the obligation to succeed without delay, gives rise to ad hoc solutions that in the first instance emphasize communication at any cost. Nonverbal means like gestures and graphics interact with language mixing and lingua franca communication, while the implicit but well-known specific requirements of the different playing positions have an attenuating effect.

Language and communication may particularly come into focus when a club—provided it has the necessary funds—appoints interpreters, organizes language classes, and hires personal assistants for new players. The easiest and most frequent solution, however, seems to be 'community interpreting', i.e., translation by a team mate sharing the same mother tongue as the

newcomer. This becomes possible due to highly motivated players who make it a point to develop—often through self-study—an impressive level of language competence, which is especially helpful for the personal integration into the new environment.

Moreover, coaches, who have to convey their message to every single member of their multilingual team, often display language skills in a variety of languages. During a match, the amount of language needed by a team member will depend on their playing position: Goalkeepers and midfielders use verbal communication much more frequently than forwards. Language also plays an important role for referees, who work in a team and cannot allow misunderstandings to happen.

We hope to have given an impression of the richness of scientific insights to be gained through the empirical study of multilingual football teams. We have seen that communication, and specifically multilingual communication, has a crucial role to play in the process of forming a group of individual players with very different backgrounds into a harmonious, effective, and successful football team.

Let us appreciate, at this point, the beauty of the determination deployed by those players and managers whose international careers have led them through a variety of languages and cultures, and who have started anew and made the effort to learn a new language every single time they arrive in a new country—acquiring thus an incredibly rich repertoire of linguistic competences in the course of their professional lives.

Notes

1 Many thanks to Carmen Konzett, Andrew Skinner, and Gerhard Pisek for proofreading an earlier version of this chapter.
2 Irene Giera, Erika Giorgianni, Eva Lavric, Gerhard Pisek, Andrew Skinner, Wolfgang Stadler, Jasmin Steiner.
3 In the meantime, international research caught up with the subject, see Chovanec and Podhorna-Polická (2009) and Baur (2012).
4 See Lavric (2012), Lavric and Steiner (2017; 2011a; 2011b), Steiner (2014; 2011), and Steiner and Lavric (2013).
5 This bibliography, compiled by Erika Giorgianni, is continuously updated and now contains over 100 pages of references.
6 All players quoted without mentioning the year were interviewed during the 2009 project seminar; in addition, interviews were conducted with Dietmar Constantini (2006), Konrad Plautz (2007), Massimo Cosentino (2014, by Erika Giorgianni), Ziya Yüksel (2016, by Eva Lavric), Francisco Díaz, Frank Ditgens, Masaki Morass, and Heinz Peischl (interviewed by students of the 2016 seminar).
7 Franceschini (2010), for instance, points out that this type of multilingual environment has hardly ever been studied before.
8 Marko Stanković, an Austrian player at US Triestina (Italy) at the time of the interview, tells an anecdote about how he failed to explain to a team mate that he had two dogs—because instead of "due cani" he kept saying "due chiavi" (two keys).

9 The Bulgarian player Antonio Mihaylov Krassimirov reports that when he first joined AC Milan's youth team, he could not communicate at all with his team mates—for him, this was a strong motivation to learn Italian as quickly as possible.
10 The following report by the Bolivian player Karl Dusvald about his time at FC St. Gallen in Switzerland makes this case:

> For our coach, it was very important that every single player could understand what he had to do. Therefore, during the training sessions he always had two players exhibit each of the exercises. So, I had to observe exactly what I was expected to do.
>
> (Translated from German by Eva Lavric)

11 But this is not necessarily true everywhere. For example, Marko Stanković reports about his experiences in Italy at US Triestina that for integration into the group language skills were more important than sporting performances. He told us: "The Italians speak only Italian and BASTA!" (translated by Eva Lavric).
12 For instance, it is very easy to show by facial expression that one has not understood something (interview Mehdi Mahdavikia). Gestures can also be very useful to indicate to a team mate that you want to receive the ball (interview Tomáš Jun), and a goalkeeper is able to organize a wall purely relying on gestures (interview Bartoloměj Kuru). Even coaches can, when needed, resort to gestures and facial expression: Karl Dusvald reports that Ademar Lisboa, the former coach of SV Reutte, spoke only a little bit of German and even less English, but he managed to get his message across with the help of gestures and facial expressions and thus to be understood and respected by his team.
13 A lingua franca is a language that people with different mother tongues use for communication although it is the mother tongue of neither of them (or of an insignificant minority).
14 Surprisingly enough, at Triestina this held true also of Stanković's several Uruguayan team mates when they spoke among themselves. They did not speak in their common mother tongue Spanish out of respect for their fellow players (interview Stanković).
15 The interview with Jun was conducted and then translated into English by Jan Chovanec.
16 If not indicated otherwise, all excerpts have been translated into English by Eva Lavric.
17 Steiner fulfilled this function at FC Wacker Innsbruck for several hispanophone players, which allowed her to include her insights in her Ph.D. thesis (see Steiner, 2014).
18 Examples from FC Wacker Innsbruck would be e.g., Fabiano, the Brazilian player whom we already mentioned, and who later on acted as a linguistic and cultural mentor for a second Brazilian player who was appointed after him; at SV Grödig, Diego Sehnem Viana was the interpreter for two other Brazilian players, Leonardo Ferreira da Silva and Thiago de Lima Silva.
19 Erich Müller reports about his time at FC Dornbirn (in the 1970s) that players of Yugoslavian origin used to translate extensively for each other. It is probable that this implied the languages designated nowadays as Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian.
20 The concrete cases in our studies include: FC Wacker Innsbruck, US Triestina, SV Reutte, SC Kriens, Manchester United Youth.

21 The following significant anecdote conveys this point: The Brazilian player Lúcio (Lucimar da Silva Ferreira) came to Bayer 04 Leverkusen and was expected to learn German. But as soon as he discovered in his course book terms like 'Waschmaschine' [washing machine] and 'Socken stopfen' [mending one's socks], he categorically refused to continue with his lessons (see Repplinger, 2005). (So much for the link between machismo and language learning motivation.)

22 See Wiemann (2003a; 2003b), Repplinger (2005), Wiemann (2008), and Wiemann et al. (2008). The course works with special football situations and football terms, has a shallow progression, and an emphasis on communication. The astute sense for the target group is visible, e.g., in the fact that the numbers from 1 to 20 are introduced with reference to famous players who used to have these numbers on their jerseys. The program is adapted personally to each new player through references to their club and its history.

23 Since, Redmond and Warren have published their *English for Football* manual (2012).

24 He speaks fluent German, English, and Spanish, and also a little Portuguese, French, and Italian.

25 This is reported e.g., by Bartoloměj Kuru, the former Czech goalkeeper of SV Grödig. Simon Manzoni, the former Italian goalkeeper of the same club, says that you have to coordinate verbally with other players when there is a free kick or a corner.

26 The importance of graphical support for the communication between coaches and players is emphasized e.g., by Martin Petráš, to whom, shortly after his arrival in Italy, the coach used to explain everything with the flipchart. Similar remarks come from Tomáš Jun, who regards tactical instructions via flipchart as extremely useful for foreign players, and Martin Bichl, who at FC Reutte played under a coach that could speak neither English nor German and thus had to communicate all his instructions via graphical means.

27 One might object that for instance Giovanni Trapattoni in all his years as a coach of Bayern Munich, VfB Stuttgart, and Red Bull Salzburg never learned proper German—in spite of this, he must have been very resourceful in his communication, otherwise he would not have been able to motivate his players.

28 Constantini emphasizes furthermore that the interpreter should not know too little about football, but not too much either. If they know too little, they will provide a very poor translation, but if they know too much, they will try to interfere and convey their own contents.

29 Lisa Müller conducted a study on referees in the framework of the 2009 project seminar, distributing 16 questionnaires across all Austrian leagues. In addition, three Austrian referees were interviewed: international referee Konrad Plautz, international assistant referee Egon Bereuter, and Austrian-Ghanaian referee Bella Bello Bitugu.

30 English, French, and German are the official languages of UEFA.

31 In fact, because of the intensity of emotions, insults seem to occur rather frequently during a game, whether between players or between players and referees. The same applies to cursing; interestingly, another study (Steiner, 2014) suggests that players very often curse in their mother tongue, as it is the act of cursing and not the content that counts.

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