

The devaluation of the other by linguistic signs.

A sociolinguistic research in the field of amateur football in Germany and France.

Abstract

Nowadays hate speech in terms of verbal devaluation is widespread in professional football. Recently, the former German international Lukas Podolski admitted that within the German national team depending on their origin they named themselves as “dago” (“Kanake”) or “potato” (“Kartoffel”). Nevertheless, prominent examples are often widely mediatized and broadly discussed in public.

However, little is known about common precise verbal devaluation and the evaluation of the severity by the referee in amateur football.

Therefore, this thesis seeks to explore the social phenomenon of daily unfiltered verbal devaluation in amateur football in Germany and France. Moreover, it aims to compare the evaluation of verbal devaluation by the referee.

In this study we used a mixed-methods approach. First, we combined the *Grounded Theory* methodology with the *triangulation* strategy in order to elaborate inductively an interdisciplinary “middle range theory” – *die Abwertung des Anderen mittels Sprache im Amateurfußball – (AdAmS) (the devaluation of the other by linguistic signs in amateur foot)*. Second, the generated hypotheses were tested by means of inferential statistic methods.

The empirical evidences show that daily verbal devaluation in amateur football is a widespread complex social phenomenon. The most frequent verbal devaluations are motivated by sexism, followed by racism and xenophobia and homophobia.

In addition, the inferential statistic tests prove that German and French referees do not evaluate specific devaluation significantly different. Moreover, German and French referee do not organize a categorial hierarchy of specific verbal devaluation.

Key words: devaluation, hate speech, amateur football, referee, sociolinguistics, Germany, France