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ANALYZING THE CONCEPT “TEAM OF HOST COUNTRY” IN GERMAN, ENGLISH, AND RUSSIAN: A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF EXPRESSIVE MEANS IN MEDIA REPORTS ON THE 2019 ICE HOCKEY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

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This paper aims to describe linguistic units expressing the concept *team of host country* in German, English, and Russian ice hockey language in relation to syntagmatic types and the associative series these units are based on. The research rests on Saussure’s notion of linguistic units, which should be included in a particular syntagmatic and associative class. The study uses corpus linguistic methodology to extract and analyze respective linguistic units from German, English, and Russian comparable sub-corpora comprising utterances from different media reports devoted to the same sporting event. The authors follow a structuralist approach and discover syntagmatic types, including constant and variable elements, and generalizing regularities in the composition of particular syntagmas. Moreover, the authors build associative series serving as bases for different syntagmatic types and indicating semantic opposition of certain linguistic units. The research also establishes various paradigms reflecting relations between the elements within linguistic units and demonstrating the interaction of syntagmatic and associative elements in the production of the means of expression. From the contrastive perspective, the authors compare linguistic units from different languages and focus on similarities they have in relation to the composition of associative series reflecting the speaker’s range of choices of verbalizations. The data was collected from articles published on web pages of German (sportschau.de, spiegel.de), English (bbc.com, ctvnews.ca), and Russian (tass.ru, rg.ru) mass media.

Key words: concept; linguistic unit; syntagmatic type; associative series; contrastive study

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is generally recognized that language is not a homogeneous formation but a phenomenon consisting of many linguistic sub-systems which are used to express ideas in myriad spheres of life. Hence, within every national language, special languages can be distinguished, and one of them is the language of sports.

According to Ferdinand de Saussure [Saussure, 2013, p. 27], the linguist shall discover “universal features by studying and comparing” different languages. Nevertheless, the most recent research on sport languages, conducted in such fields as applied linguistics [Kennard, McLellan, & McKinlay, 2018; Klégr & Bozděchová, 2019; Levin, 2019], discourse analysis [File, 2018; Brooke, 2019; Mückel, 2019; Caldwell, 2020], social linguistics [Caldwell, Walsh, Vine, & Juraidini, 2016], comparative linguistics [Lewandowski, 2012], psycholinguistics [Wenner, 2010; Desmarais & Bruce, 2010; McKelvie, 2017] and gender studies [Adams, Anderson, & McCormack, 2010], is based on one national language. The research focusing on the comparison of sport languages across two or more national languages is very scarce. Therefore, we would like to fill a gap in the linguistic study of sport languages by making a contrastive study of ice hockey language in German, English, and Russian using the structuralist approach.

The research in this paper rests on Saussure’s notion of a two-sided linguistic entity or linguistic unit which is defined as “a slice of sound which to the exclusion of everything that precedes and follows it in the spoken chain is the signifier of a certain concept” [Saussure, 2011, p. 104]. According to Saussure, each linguistic unit should “be fitted into its syntagmatic or associative class” [Saussure, 2011, p. 137]. The syntagmatic class is constituted by syntagmatic relations where a certain linguistic unit stands in syntagmatic opposition to other units surrounding it [Saussure, 2011, p. 131]. The associative class is constituted by associative relations where a certain linguistic unit stands in associative opposition to other units “that may come to mind” [Saussure, 2011, p. 131]. The interaction of syntagmatic and associative classes results in latent syntagmatic types consisting of variable elements, the selection of which depends on the speaker’s choice [Saussure, 2013, p. 152]. Thus, selected variable elements within a certain syntagmatic type constitute concrete syntagmas, which are supported by several associative series [Saussure, 2013, p. 151]. This theoretical framework will be used in our methodology and data analysis.

In this paper, we aim to compare, through the perspective of contrastive linguistics, the system of linguistic units serving as signifiers of the concept *team of host country* in ice hockey language in German, English, and Russian. To achieve this aim, we are going to answer the following research questions: What linguistic units are used in German, English, and Russian to express the concept of *team of host country* in ice hockey language? To which syntagmatic types do these units conform? On which associative series are these syntagmatic types based? In what paradigms can the identified syntagmatic types and associative series be unified? What verbalization choice does the speaker have in accordance to a particular paradigm? What similarities do the linguistic units of different languages have in relation to associative series and the speaker’s choice?

The study is structured as follows. First, it specifies the methodology and the corpus used to explore the data. It then analyzes and discusses examples from the collected corpus. Finally, it draws conclusions about similarities in corresponding linguistic units and syntagmatic types in German, English, and Russian.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the purpose of our research, it was necessary to build comparable corpora of ice hockey language from German, English, and Russian. We included in the corpora utterances in which the concept *team of host country* was expressed by various linguistic units. We collected data from the articles published on the web pages of German (sportschau.de, spiegel.de), English (bbc.com, ctvnews.ca), and Russian (tass.ru, rg.ru) mass media.

Table 1 indicates the language, the source, the number of articles, and utterances for each sub-corpus, as well as the total number of articles and utterances in the whole corpus.

Table 1. Quantitative description of the collected corpus

SUB-CORPUS (LANGUAGE)	SOURCE OF EVIDENCE	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	NUMBER OF UTTERANCES
German	sportschau.de	9	11
	spiegel.de	4	7
English	bbc.com	3	3
	ctvnews.ca	2	3
Russian	tass.ru	2	2
	rg.ru	6	7
TOTAL		26	33

The contextual comparison of selected utterances allowed us to identify linguistic units used to express the concept *team of host country* in each language. During the morphological comparison of identified units, we found elements that were common to different linguistic units. We considered these common elements as constant elements opposed to other variable elements. Then, we arranged the corresponding variable and constant elements of linguistic units into associative series according to their semantic content. The consecution of associative series in different linguistic units were considered as syntagmatic types. Based on the interaction of associative series and syntagmatic types, we established paradigms that reflect possible ways to form linguistic units and the possible speaker's choices in different languages.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our analysis is divided into four sections: first, we indicate linguistic units and establish on their basis syntagmatic types in the German, English, and Russian sub-corpora successively; then, from a comparative perspective, we determine universal features in the associative series on which multilingual linguistic units are based.

The examples in the German sub-corpus show that the element *Gastgeber* “a host” is the most common in utterances where the concept *team of host country* is expressed. This allows us to consider the element *Gastgeber* as a constant element in different syntagmatic types.

The first syntagmatic type, which can be established based on the German sub-corpus, is *Article + Gastgeber*. The examples of this type are presented below:

(1) *Dank eines Treffers von Mark Stone eine Sekunde vor Schluss hat Mitfavorit Kanada bei der Eishockey-WM in der Slowakei den zweiten Sieg eingefahren und den **Gastgebern** die zweite Niederlage beigebracht.*

(2) *Und das nutzte die Slowakei eiskalt aus: Zunächst traf Sekera mit einem halbhohen Abschluss zum 1:1-Ausgleich (29.), und nur gut 60 Sekunden später erzielte dann Hudacek ein Powerplay **des Gastgebers** die Führung.*

(3) *Bei der WM in der Slowakei lag sie mit 1:2 gegen **den Gastgeber** zurück, einer der besten Verteidiger musste raus, und es blieben nur noch wenige Minuten zu spielen.*

(4) *Zwischen dem 10. und 26. Mai findet in der Slowakei die 83. Eishockey-WM statt. **Der Gastgeber** trifft zum Auftakt auf die USA.*

(5) *Titelverteidiger Schweden hat sein Auftaktspiel bei der Eishockey-WM in der Slowakei verloren. Auch die USA sind gegen **den Gastgeber** mit einer Niederlage gestartet.*

(6) *Für das deutsche Team könnte es gegen **die Gastgeber** schwer werden.*

(7) *Der Favorit in der Gruppe A, in der auch das deutsche Team spielt, hatte zum Auftakt gegen Finnland verloren und lag auch gegen **die Gastgeber** im dritten Gruppenspiel zweimal mit zwei Toren in Rückstand.*

Within this syntagmatic type, there is an opposition of linguistic units *der Gastgeber* “the host” and *die Gastgeber* “the hosts”. Grammatical forms of the linguistic unit *der Gastgeber* “the host” are exemplified in utterances 2 (*des Gastgebers* “the host’s”); 3 and 5 (*den Gastgeber* “the host” in the direct object form); and 4 (*der Gastgeber* “the host”). Grammatical forms of linguistic unit *die Gastgeber* “the hosts” are presented in examples 1 (*den Gastgebern* “to the hosts”); and 6 and 7 (*die Gastgeber* “the hosts” in the direct object form). This opposition can be brought together in the following paradigm.

Table 2. Paradigm “Syntagmatic type Article + Gastgeber”

VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	CONSTANT ELEMENT
der	Gastgeber
die	

The paradigm demonstrates that syntagmas *der Gastgeber* and *die Gastgeber* are supported by two associative series when fitted in the syntagmatic class *Article + Gastgeber*. Whereas the series *Gastgeber* contains only one constant element, the series of the variable elements is constituted by the associative relations between linguistic units *der* (definite article in the singular) and *die* (definite article in the plural). From Table 2 we can see that the speaker, when expressing the concept *team of host country*, can use the singular or the plural of *Gastgeber*.

The second syntagmatic type from the German sub-corpus is *Hosted Event + Gastgeber + Country*. The utterances using this type are exemplified below:

(8) *Die Finnen besiegten in der deutschen Gruppe A in Kosice nach Kanada (3:1) **Gastgeber Slowakei** mit 4:2 (2:1, 0:1, 2:0).*

(9) *Der Erfolg gegen **Gastgeber Slowakei** ist jetzt ein echtes Ausrufezeichen.*

(10) ***Gastgeber Slowakei** hat bei der Eishockey-WM seine geringe Chance auf das Viertelfinale gewahrt, während Deutschland die Tabellenführung in seiner Gruppe an Finnland abgeben musste.*

(11) *Seine geringe Chance auf das Viertelfinale wahrte unterdessen **Gastgeber Slowakei**: Der Weltmeister von 2002 besiegte Frankreich mit 6:3 (2:0, 1:2, 3:1) und verbesserte sich in der deutschen Gruppe in Kosice mit sechs Punkten auf Platz fünf.*

(12) *In der deutschen Gruppe A droht **Gastgeber Slowakei** trotz eines ungefährdeten 7:1 (3:1, 3:0, 1:0) gegen Aufsteiger Großbritannien das Vorrunden-Aus.*

(13) *Es folgte ein erster Höhepunkt mit dem spektakulären Last-Minute-Sieg durch das Siegtor von NHL-Star Leon Draisaitl gegen **Gastgeber Slowakei**.*

(14) *Den neunten Platz in der Endabrechnung sicherte sich **WM-Gastgeber Slowakei** mit dem 2:1 (0:0, 1:0, 0:1, 0:0, 1:0) Sieg nach Penaltyschießen gegen Dänemark.*

(15) *Kanada besiegt **WM-Gastgeber Slowakei** eine Sekunde vor Schluss.*

Within this syntagmatic type, there is an opposition of linguistic units *Gastgeber Slowakei* “the host Slovakia” (examples 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) and *WM-Gastgeber Slowakei* “the host of world championship Slovakia” (examples 14 and 15). This opposition can be brought together in the following paradigm.

Table 3. Paradigm “Syntagmatic type Hosted Event + Gastgeber + Country”

VARIABLE ELEMENT HOSTED EVENT	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT COUNTRY
-	Gastgeber	Slowakei
WM-		

The paradigm demonstrates that syntagmas *Gastgeber Slowakei* and *WM-Gastgeber Slowakei* are supported by three associative series when fitted in the syntagmatic class *Hosted Event + Gastgeber + Country*. Besides the series of the constant element, these syntagmas, on the one hand, rest on the associative relations between the linguistic unit *WM-* (abbreviation of *world championship*) and the non-signification of a hosted event. On the other hand, this syntagmatic type is based on the associative relations between names of the countries in which a sporting event can be held. Table 3 shows that the speaker, when expressing the concept *team of host country*, can decide which country should be mentioned in the utterance and whether a hosted tournament should be signified.

The third syntagmatic type, which can be identified in the German sub-corpus, is *Article + Attribute + Gastgeber + Country*. This type can be exemplified by only one utterance:

(16) *Die Finnen hatten zuletzt vor acht Jahren die Weltmeisterschaft gewonnen, ihren ersten Titel holten sie 1995 gegen **den damaligen Gastgeber Schweden**.*

Within this syntagmatic type, the linguistic unit *der damalige Gastgeber Schweden* “the former host Sweden” contrasts with the linguistic unit *Gastgeber Slowakei* “the host Slovakia” (examples 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13). This opposition can be presented in the following paradigm.

Table 4. Paradigm “Syntagmatic type Article + Attribute + Gastgeber + Country”

VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	VARIABLE ELEMENT ATTRIBUTE	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT COUNTRY
-	-	Gastgeber	Slowakei Schweden (country's name)
der	damalige		

The paradigm demonstrates that syntagmas *Gastgeber Slowakei* “the host Slovakia” and *der damalige Gastgeber Schweden* “the former host Sweden” are supported by four associative series when fitted in the syntagmatic class *Article + Attribute + Gastgeber + Country*. The series with the linguistic unit *Gastgeber* “host” consists of one constant element. The series with the variable element *Country* rests on the associative relations between the names of different countries and means that the speaker can choose one of these names in accordance with a real-world situation.

The associative series with the variable element *Attribute* is based on associative relations between attributes assigned to the linguistic unit *Gastgeber* and the absence of an attribute. This associative opposition enables the speaker to decide whether a particular feature of *Gastgeber* should be specified. But the specification of a feature necessitates the use of a definite article. This necessity is reflected in the associative series of the variable element *Article*, which includes the opposition of the linguistic unit *der* (the singular of definite article) and the absence of signification.

Thus, we have identified four syntagmatic types with the constant element *Gastgeber* in German, which can be used to build linguistic units to express the idea *team of host country*. The following paradigm brings all these syntagmatic types together.

Table 5. Paradigm “Syntagmatic types with the constant element *Gastgeber*”

VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	VARIABLE ELEMENT ADJECTIVE	VARIABLE ELEMENT TOURNAMENT	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT COUNTRY
die	-	-	Gastgeber	-
der	-	-		-
	damalige	-		Slowakei Schweden (country's name)
-	-	-		
-	-	WM-		

The paradigm in Table 5 shows the opposition of syntagmatic types with the constant element *Gastgeber* in relation to the associative series of which these types consist and demonstrates the linguistic units that can be built through these series.

In the German sub-corpus, there is an utterance which does not include the element *Gastgeber*:

(17) *Denn die Tschechen sind so etwas wie ein Geheimfavorit. Das liegt auch daran, dass sie so etwas wie **das zweite Heimteam** sind.*

Based on the linguistic unit *das zweite Heimteam* “the second host team” the syntagmatic type *Article + Attribute + Heimteam* can be established. As there is only one example with this linguistic unit in the German sub-corpus, we cannot make a judgement about associative series in this syntagmatic type. However, the existence of a linguistic unit where the constant element is different from *Gastgeber* means that the speaker can choose between two paradigms of syntagmatic types: that with the constant element *Gastgeber*, or that with the constant element *Heimteam*.

Now, we turn to the analysis of the English sub-corpus where *hosts* is the most common element. Therefore, it can be considered as a constant. The first syntagmatic type that can be established in the English sub-corpus is *Article + Hosts + Country*. The utterances with this type are exemplified below:

(18) *A Saturday night date with **the hosts** won't be one for the weak of heart. Ice hockey is the national sport of Slovakia and they will expect a comprehensive victory.*

(19) *Next up it is **the hosts Slovakia** on Saturday which will be played in a crazy atmosphere. They are big, strong and talented, which should make for an entertaining night.*

(20) *Their first half-dozen games produced brave defeats by Germany and the United States, but also heavy losses to Canada, Denmark, Finland and **hosts Slovakia**.*

(21) *Matus Sukel and Adam Liska had two goals each for Slovakia. Ladislav Nagy also scored for **the hosts**, who gave up leads of 2-0 and 4-2 in the game.*

Within this syntagmatic type, there is an opposition of linguistic units *the hosts* (examples 18 and 21), *the hosts Slovakia* (example 19) and *hosts Slovakia* (example 20) which can be brought together in the following paradigm.

Table 6. Paradigm “Syntagmatic type Article + Hosts + Country”

VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT COUNTRY
the	hosts	-
-		Slovakia

The paradigm demonstrates that syntagmas *the hosts*, *the hosts Slovakia* and *hosts Slovakia* are supported by three associative series when fitted in the syntagmatic class *Article + Hosts + Country*. The associative series *hosts* consist of one constant element. In contrast, the series of the variable element *Article* contains the associative relations between the definite article *the* and the absence of an article. Similarly, the series of the variable element *Country* rests on the associative relations between the names of different countries and the absence of such signification.

From the paradigm “Syntagmatic type *Article + Hosts + Country*,” it is obvious that the speaker, when he wants to express the idea *team of host country*, can choose whether to verbalize the name of the country. The paradigm also demonstrates interdependent elements: the absence of the article makes necessary the verbalization of the country, or in other words, if the speaker does not want to mention the country, he has to use the article.

In the collected English sub-corpus, there is an element *host* that can be considered as an alternative constant. The utterances with this element are exemplified below:

(22) *Mark Stone scored a power-play with 1.8 seconds left in regulation to give Canada a 6-5 win over **host Slovakia** on Monday at the world hockey championship.*

(23) *In matchups of teams that won’t advance, Latvia beat Norway 4-1 in Group B and **the host Slovaks** outlasted Denmark 2-1 in a shootout decided by penalty shots.*

The examples demonstrate that, within the syntagmatic type *Article + Host + Country/Nationality*, there is an opposition of linguistic units *host Slovakia* and *the host Slovaks*. This opposition can be brought together in the following paradigm.

Table 7. Paradigm “Syntagmatic type Article + Host + Country/Nationality”

VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT COUNTRY/NATIONALITY
-	host	Slovakia
the		Slovaks

The paradigm demonstrates that syntagmas *host Slovakia* and *the host Slovaks* are supported by three associative series when fitted in the syntagmatic class *Article + Host + Country/Nationality*. In addition to the series of the constant element and that of the variable element *Article* described in the previous paradigm, there is also the associative series of the variable element *Country/Nationality* that is based on the associative relations between the names of countries and the names of nationalities. The paradigm shows that, using the syntagmatic type *Article + Host + Country/Nationality*, the speaker can mention the host country either through

its name or through the name of its nationality. In the latter case, it is necessary to use the article.

Now, we turn to the analysis of the Russian sub-corpus. The only element presented in all Russian utterances and, therefore, considered as a constant is *хозяева*. In Russian, the linguistic unit *хозяева* has two meanings: *hosts* and *owners*. Thus, we have to integrate both these meanings in the name of the variable element and call the first Russian syntagmatic type *Хозяева + Hosted Event/Owned Object*. This syntagmatic type is exemplified below:

(24) Финны победили **хозяев первенства со счетом 4:2**.

(25) В дебютном матче **хозяева льда** в Кошице, где играют команды из группы “А,” одолели одного из главных фаворитов турнира, команду США.

(26) В дебюте второго периода **хозяева турнира** получили двойной численный перевес и усилиями Эрика Чернака успешно его реализовали на 22-й минуте.

(27) Правда, **хозяева льда** к тому моменту еще не имели возможности задействовать всех сильнейших.

(28) В рамках заключительного этапа Евротура, Чешских игр, россияне 5 мая довольно уверенно расправились с **хозяевами льда** - 4:1.

(29) Этот результат, судя по всему, закрыл **хозяевам чемпионата мира** дорогу в четвертьфинал.

Within this syntagmatic type, there is an opposition of linguistic units *хозяева льда* “owners of the ice” (examples 25 and 28), *хозяева первенства* “hosts of the competition” (example 24), *хозяева турнира* “hosts of the tournament” (example 26) and *хозяева чемпионата мира* “hosts of the world championship” (example 29). This opposition can be brought together in the following paradigm.

Table 8. Paradigm “Syntagmatic type Хозяева + Hosted Event/Owned Object”

CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT HOSTED EVENT/OWNED OBJECT
хозяева	льда
	первенства
	турнира
	чемпионата мира

The paradigm demonstrates that syntagmas *хозяева льда*, *хозяева первенства*, *хозяева турнира*, and *хозяева чемпионата мира* are supported by two associative series. Besides the series of the constant element *хозяева* “hosts”, these syntagmas rest on the associative relations between the owned object (*льда* “of the ice”) and the hosted sporting events (*первенства* “of the competition”, *турнира* “of the tournament” and *чемпионата мира* “of the world championship”).

The paradigm “Syntagmatic type *Хозяева + Hosted Event/Owned Object*” shows that the speaker has several options when he wants to express the concept *team of host country* in Russian. Thus, he can allude to ice hockey by saying *хозяева льда* “the owners of the ice”. Another option is to mention the sporting event, either specified by use of the linguistic unit *хозяева чемпионата мира* “the hosts of the world championship”, or unspecified with the linguistic units *хозяева первенства* “the hosts of the competition” and *хозяева турнира* “the hosts of the tournament”.

Another Russian syntagmatic type which we shall call *Хозяева + Hosted Event + Nationality* can be illustrated with following examples:

(30) В следующем туре сборная Финляндии 11 мая сыграет с **хозяевами турнира словаками**.

(31) Мощный старт взяли финны, которые обыграли в дебюте Канаду (3:1), а затем и **хозяев турнира словаков** (4:2).

(32) “Кленовые листья” одержали тяжелейшую победу над **хозяевами ЧМ-2019 словаками**.

Within this syntagmatic type, there is an opposition of linguistic units *хозяева турнира* “the hosts of the tournament” (example 26), *хозяева турнира словаки* “the hosts of the tournament Slovaks” (examples 30 and 31), *хозяева ЧМ-2019 словаки* “the hosts of the World Championship 2019 Slovaks” (example 30). because one of the variable elements can be verbalized as *турнир* or *ЧМ-2019*. This opposition can be brought together in the following paradigm.

Table 9. Paradigm “Syntagmatic type Хозяева + Hosted Event + Nationality”

CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT HOSTED EVENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT NATIONALITY
хозяева	турнира	-
	ЧМ-2019	словаки

The paradigm shows that syntagmas *хозяева турнира*, *хозяева турнира словаки* and *хозяева ЧМ-2019 словаки* are supported by three associative series. Whereas the series *хозяева* “hosts” contains only one constant element, the series of the variable elements *Hosted Event* is constituted by the associative relations between linguistic units signifying a particular sporting event (*турнира* “of the tournament”, *ЧМ-2019* “of the World Championship 2019”). Likewise, the associative series of the variable element *Nationality* rests on the associative relations between the name of a nationality (in our examples, *словаки* “Slovaks”) and the absence of nationalities in the syntagma. The paradigm demonstrates that the speaker has a choice not only between a specified and an unspecified sporting event but also between a signification and non-signification of the host country’s nationality.

Now, we are going to compare the elicited German, English, and Russian linguistic units from the collected corpus with the aim to find universal features in the syntagmatic series they are based on.

First, one may note that all three languages enable the speaker to express the concept *team of host country* without signifying a particular country. The respective linguistic units are exemplified in the table below.

Table 10. Universal feature: non-signification of a host country

	VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT OWNED OBJECT/HOSTED EVENT
GERMAN	der	Gastgeber	-
	die		-
ENGLISH	the	hosts	-
RUSSIAN	-	хозяева	льда
			первенства
			турнира
			чемпионата мира

Table 10 demonstrates German, English, and Russian syntagmas, which do not have a series based on the associative relations between the names of countries.

Then, in German and English sub-corpora, there are linguistic units, which express the concept *team of host country* through the name of a particular country. These units are presented in the table below.

Table 11. Universal feature: signification of a host country through its name

	VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	VARIABLE ELEMENT ATTRIBUTE	VARIABLE ELEMENT HOSTED EVENT	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT COUNTRY
GERMAN	-	-	-	Gastgeber	Slowakei
	der	damalige	WM-		Schweden
ENGLISH	-	-	-	hosts	Slovakia
	the			host	
	-				

Table 11 presents German and English syntagmas with the variable element *Country* constituted by associative relations between the names of different countries.

Further, in English and Russian sub-corpora, there are linguistic units that express the concept *team of host country* by mentioning a nationality. The respective linguistic units are exemplified in the table below.

Table 12. Universal feature: signification of a host country through the name of a nationality

	VARIABLE ELEMENT ARTICLE	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT HOSTED EVENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT NATIONALITY
ENGLISH	the	host	-	Slovaks
RUSSIAN	-	хозяева	турнира	словаки
			ЧМ-2019	

Table 12 demonstrates English and Russian syntagmas that contain the variable element *Nationality* based on the associative relations between the names of nationalities of host countries.

Finally, in German and Russian sub-corpora, there are linguistic units that enable the specification of a hosted sporting event. The respective linguistic units are exemplified in the table below.

Table 13. Universal feature: specification of a hosted sport event

	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT HOSTED EVENT	CONSTANT ELEMENT	VARIABLE ELEMENT COUNTRY/ NATIONALITY
GERMAN	-	WM-	Gastgeber	Slowakei
RUSSIAN	хозяева	чемпионата мира	-	-
		ЧМ-2019	-	словаки

Table 13 shows German and Russian syntagmas in which there is an associative series *Hosted Event* reflecting associative relations between the names of sporting events.

4. CONCLUSION

In the study, we have analyzed the means of expression of the concept *team of host country* in German, English, and Russian. Through the analysis of the collected sub-corpora, we have identified linguistic units that were used for the expression of this concept in media reports on the 2019 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship. The results reveal that identified linguistic units are syntagmas that conform to particular syntagmatic types.

We have also explored which associative series these syntagmatic types are based on and which of the associative series are common to the German, English, and Russian types that we have found. The identified associative series indicate what verbalization choice the speaker has and how this choice varies from one language to another.

The significance of the research lies in the fact that it can serve as the basis for further contrastive study of the sport discourse. The findings of the current research can be instrumental in such fields of science as lexicography, translation theory, contrastive linguistics.

With our research, we do not make a claim for the complete clarification of the considered matter, which should be the subject of further studies. However, we hope that by conducting this inquiry we can contribute to the understanding of the linguistic explication of a particular concept.

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