

The Language of Transfers

(July 2009)

Background information

The Transfer Window opens on July 1st and clubs have 6 weeks to buy new players. Clubs cannot buy or sell players again until the next transfer window opens in December.

Pre-reading

Before reading the text, answer the questions below.

1. What do you know about transfers – the buying and selling of footballers?
2. Write down as many words and phrases you know that are connected to transfers.
3. What kind of information would you like to know about football transfers? Make a list of questions to ask, for example, when can transfers take place, what do we call the money paid to a club for a player?

A. Main Idea: skimming

Quickly read the passage below and answer the questions.

1. How many paragraphs are there in the text?
2. What are the sub-headings of these paragraphs?
3. Write a sentence to explain the main idea of the text in your own words.
4. What kind of article is this?
 - a) informative
 - b) argumentative
 - c) narrative
 - d) opinion

B. Main Idea: paragraph one

Read the first paragraph and answer the questions below

1. What is the definition of a transfer?
2. There are two ways for a player to leave a club, what are they?
3. What five reasons are given to suggest that transfers are not simple at all?

C. True or False: section one

Read section 1 (Speculation) and decide if the following sentences are true or false.

1. T / F Speculation about transfers usually starts in the press
 Media
2. T / F The text suggests that a 'dream move' may only be for financial gain.
 'Though we all know that ... means more money'
3. T / E It's cheaper to buy a player just after he has signed a new contract.
 ...nearing the end of his contract ... cheaper price
4. T / E Clubs are free to offer a contract to any player they wish
 It's illegal to talk to a player contracted to another club

D. Vocabulary: section three

Look at section 3 (Transfer) and explain the underlined word from the context of the article

1. There are two set periods in the year when teams can buy
2. A club will decide how much a player is worth, a price is put on his head and then will enter into negotiations
3. ... if it has been a particularly quick affair and maybe rather surprising, the press say a player has been snapped up
4. ... he is out of contract, deemed not good enough or that he has been a loyal servant and can make some money from a move

E. Paraphrase: section 4

Read section 4 (Money) and paraphrase the following sentence (use your own words)

1. Football is a huge business and the money involved in transfers helps to keep it running.

F. Discussion

Read the article again and answer the questions below

1. Transfer fees should be abolished.
2. Players can only move from a certain age, i.e. no one under 20 can be transferred.
3. Transfers only benefit the bigger clubs as they have more money than anyone else.
4. The £80 million transfer record will never be broken.
5. There should be a limit on how much a club can spend each season.

The Language of Transfers

(July 2009)

ANSWERS

A. Main Idea: skimming

Quickly read the passage below and answer the questions.

1. How many paragraphs are there in the text?

5

2. What are the sub-headings of these paragraphs?

Introduction / speculation / contact / transfer / money

3. Write a sentence to explain the main idea of the text in your own words.

This text is about the language involved when discussing football transfers and is divided into four separate sections.

4. What kind of article is this?

a) **informative**

b) argumentative

c) narrative

d) opinion

B. Main Idea: paragraph one

Read the first paragraph and answer the questions below

1. What is the definition of a transfer?

A transfer is when a footballer moves from one club to another

2. There are two ways for a player to leave a club, what are they?

either the club decides to sell the player or the player chooses to leave the club

3. What five reasons are given to suggest that transfers are not simple at all?

Club managers / players / agents / fans / the media

C. True or False: section one

Read section 1 (Speculation) and decide if the following sentences are true or false.

1. T / F Speculation about transfers usually starts in the **press**

Media

2. T / F The text suggests that a 'dream move' may only be for financial gain.

'Though we all know that ... means more money'

3. T / F It's cheaper to buy a player just after he has signed a new contract.

...nearing the end of his contract ... cheaper price

4. T / F Clubs are free to offer a contract to any player they wish

It's illegal to talk to a player contracted to another club

D. Vocabulary: section three

Look at section 3 (Transfer) and explain the underlined word from the context of the article

1. There are two set periods in the year when teams can buy

fixed

2. A club will decide how much a player is worth, a price is put on his head and then will enter into negotiations

valued

3. ... if it has been a particularly quick affair and maybe rather surprising, the press say a player has been snapped up

especially

4. ... he is out of contract, deemed not good enough or that he has been a loyal servant and can make some money from a move

decided by others

E. Paraphrase: section 4

Read section 4 (Money) and paraphrase the following sentence (use your own words)

1. Football is a huge business and the money involved in transfers helps to keep it running.

Transfer fees ensure that football remains a big business

Reading

Introduction

A transfer is when a footballer moves from one club to another and this can come about in two ways: either the club decides to sell the player or the player chooses to leave the club. Simple. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. The whole process is a complete mess as:

- * club managers attempt to buy the best players within their budgets
- * players look for higher salaries and a better chance of winning trophies
- * agents want to earn large fees from their clients
- * fans are full of hope or dread at the prospect of buying someone new or selling one of their stars
- * press speculation fuels the whole process.

So, here is a brief guide to the language of football transfers in four easy steps.

1. Speculation

The transfer process usually begins in the media with rumours and gossip linking players (and managers) with different clubs. A player may be unhappy with the way he has been treated by his

club and is angling for a move away, or if a bigger club is showing interest, the player is flattered and suggests it would be a dream move for him - though we all know that it just means more money. Of course, the player may not wish to move and instead vows to stay and commits his future to the team. Speculation is particularly rife, or common, when a player is nearing the end of his contract as clubs can buy the player at a cheaper price. As we mentioned earlier, the club may well wish to get rid of the player and so they make him available and allow him to contact another club.

2. Contact

Officially, a club is not allowed to talk to another player while he is contracted to a club but they can ask permission to do so, particularly if the club suggest they are open to offers for the player. The press may report that officials from the two clubs were seen talking but if this happens while a player is still under contract, then it is known as tapping up and is illegal and could mean a fine or another form of punishment. If the talks go well then the press may suggest that the teams are close to a deal and that a bid has been made but if there are any problems then the deal falls through and no one is going anywhere.

3. The Transfer

There are two set periods in the year when teams can buy and sell players and this is known as the transfer window. A club will decide how much a player is worth, a price is put on his head and then will enter into negotiations with another club. When the two agree a fee and the player is happy to move, then we say that he has signed for another club, he has moved, he has been transferred and that the club has sealed the deal. Sometimes, if it has been a particularly quick affair and maybe rather surprising, the press say a player has been snapped up by another team.

Not all transfers involve money. Sometimes a player moves to another club on a free - costing nothing - as he is out of contract, deemed not good enough or that he has been a loyal servant and can make some money from a move (usually at the end of his career). Another transfer that does not involve cash is the loan deal which sees a player being lent or loaned to another club for a set period of time, while a swap deal sees two players changing clubs, one player joining one team and the other moving in the opposite direction.

4. Money

Football is a huge business and the money involved in transfers helps to keep it running. If a player is still under contract at his original club then the new club has to pay some money to secure the player, a transfer fee, and usually, the better the player, the higher the fee. The current transfer record is £80 million paid by Real Madrid to Manchester United for Portuguese star Ronaldo. The player will also receive a signing-on fee along with his new contract and, of course, his agent will also benefit. It is not usual these days for a club to pay the full fee up front but rather it is paid in installments which may last for years in some cases.

So, the transfer process is now complete. However, the business of football, the intense media hunger for stories and the fans' desire for success all mean that transfer speculation soon begins again and before you know it, the transfer window is open once more and the whole procedure starts again.