

## *Bouncebackability*

### **A Web-as-corpus-based case study of a new formation, its interpretation, generalization/spread and subsequent decline**

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#### ***Abstract***

*Bouncebackability is a recent formation, coined originally to describe a football team's averting defeat in a particular match in 2004. Football fans subsequently picked up and generalized the neologism. Associated online communities even started campaigning for its inclusion in "the dictionary". There were also signs of natural spread, with a broadening interpretation, beyond the formation's original domain. However, various Web-searches indicate that the initial "success" of the formation is not lasting, and that it may already be dropping out of use. Subconscious resistance against the formation's 'odd' morphological make-up is suggested as a reason for this lack of lasting institutionalization.*

**Key words:** word-formation, interpretation, bouncebackability, institutionalization

## **1. Introduction and background**

### *1.1 General problems of observation*

Normally, a novel word starts out as a nonce formation (NF).<sup>1</sup> It may then be picked up by other speakers and spread in a speech community until it may be considered institutionalised.<sup>2</sup> This gradual process of the introduction of a novel word into the language, which has to include the reception of the word by speakers who encounter it for the first time and who may or may not memorize and re-use it later, is however generally not observable directly.<sup>3</sup> We may be present at, or have concrete records of, the very first occurrence of the word – at its birth as a NF. But more often than not when we encounter words that are new to us these are clearly not completely new. That is: such a word is no longer a NF from the point of view of the speaker we hear it from (who, instead, is already *using* the word, rather than actually *forming* it anew). We do not know what happened in between: we normally cannot know when the speaker we hear the word from for the first time has him/herself encountered the word for the first time, or whether he/she has formed it him/herself originally.

Furthermore, it is worthwhile asking whether there is a difference between encountering a word at the point that it is also formed for the first time, and encountering an unfamiliar word that we have to assume is already used as an institutionalized lexeme. Introspection suggests that there is such a difference.<sup>4</sup> For instance, in the latter case we assume that the word already 'has' a fixed meaning, so we try to interpret the word by contextual clues as to an established semantic specification and, simultaneously, on the basis of 'meaning predictability' factors (Štekauer 2005), i.e. we check if the most predictable reading(s) is (are) in fact applicable. In contrast, the interpretation of a true NF will be much more dependent on situational and/or co-textual information and knowledge shared by speaker and listener (which can totally override context-free meaning predictability) – but it also need not be more than that. In other words: if I encounter a new word that I can assume is nothing more than a NF, I will be content with getting its *reference* (if it is a noun),<sup>5</sup>

without wondering too much about the word's applicability in any other contexts or its potential for being/becoming a general vocabulary item. On the other hand: if I have reason to assume that the as yet unfamiliar word is actually already institutionalized (and thus requires less contextual embedding), I will also strive to arrive at an interpretation that matches, or at least approximates its institutionalized generic *meaning* with which it is established.

The problem remains that introspection does not get us very far in trying to observe the transition from NF to listeme, or in answering the associated questions of the reception of a new word by growing numbers of speakers. To overcome the difficulty of direct observation, indirect methods may be pursued – such as exposure and interpretation tests with informants, under replicable laboratory conditions, as it were; cf. e.g. Downing (1977), Stöhr (1987), Hohenhaus (1996), and most recently and most extensively Štekauer (2005).

Valuable as these methods undoubtedly are, it is difficult to control certain aspects such as individually differing assumptions informants may tacitly make about words presented to them.<sup>6</sup> Further problems concern differing degrees of tolerance towards deviation: some speakers are more conservative (under lab conditions!) while others more readily accept what they are presented with. Statistically we may arrive at a fairly decent approximation (ironing out individual differences), but “the real thing” – first-time and repeated reception of real words by real speech communities in the real world – remains largely unobservable directly.

However, the (relatively) new medium of the Internet may slightly alleviate this and provide somewhat less indirect clues: here we may not only detect the original first occurrence of a novel word, we may also partly observe – as it happens – the reception of the word, meta-communicative comments, overt interpretations; and we can try and chart spread.

## 1.2 *Relevance of the particular case of bouncebackability*

For over a decade I have been hypothesizing about what I call ‘non-lexicalizability’. Put very briefly, this is the assumption that some new formations may systematically be excluded from becoming permanent lexical entries (while they may still be perfectly normal as possible NFs!). This was based on the observation that certain types of words apparently do in fact never get listed. Explanations for this include context-dependency (and non-generic semantic interpretations), certain syntax-like special types<sup>7</sup> of NFs etc., and formal deviation. The latter seems to boil down to: only well-formed formations should be lexicalizable. If, however, we do find ill-formed novel formations that still make it into the permanent dictionary, then that part of the theory of non-lexicalizability is obviously challenged. *Bouncebackability* could be seen as precisely such a counter-example (see below). Furthermore it is a very recent formation and one that appears to have spent most of its life on the Internet, which opens up possibilities of tracking its development by means of ‘Web-as-corpus’ research.

## 2. The case study: *bouncebackability*

### 2.1 *Origin*

First of all, the exact origin of the word is well documented on countless websites, so that we can be reasonably sure that the following account<sup>8</sup> is accurate: the word was first used in

November 2004 by Iain Dowie, then manager of the English football club Crystal Palace, who said in an interview after a match in which his team had managed to equalize against Arsenal that “Crystal Palace have shown great *bouncebackability* against their opponents to really be back in this game.”

## 2.2 Description

Semantically the formation is less remarkable than it is morphologically. Interpretation is not that much of a problem here. The simple, fully transparent paraphrase employing the formation’s constituents, ‘the ability to bounce back’, serves just fine as an initial interpretation. Context provides the further specification: ‘in a football match, i.e. equalizing after having been a (couple of) goal(s) behind’. The ‘problem’, i.e. what is odd about the word in morphological terms, is this: it appears to be an *-ity*-nominalization of an *-able*-derivative. This is a highly productive model, of course; however, *-able* normally requires as a base a transitive verb, which *to bounce back* clearly is not.<sup>9</sup> Thus the formation would seem to violate the morpho-syntactic subcategorization rules involved internal to the formation.

Theoretically, though, one could perhaps argue that this formation is not a derivative at all but a compound, i.e. with a different bracketing: [[bounce back] [ability]] rather than [[[bounce back] -able] -ity]. However, as a compound we would expect compound fore-stress (probably on *back*), and not the natural derivation stress pattern that we do observe (i.e. *ab'ility*), when we actually hear the word uttered. (However, as indicated, it is mostly found in written form on the Web, and hence no phonological argument could apply to those occurrences.)

## 2.3 Initial reception and signs of spread

The formation was quickly picked up (as a sort of running joke) on the Sky Sports TV show ‘*Soccer AM*’<sup>10</sup> and during the season of 2004/2005 it acquired something like a cult following. This also sparked a campaign to get the word into ‘the dictionary’ – most often the “Oxford Dictionary” (presumably that is supposed to be the OED) is mentioned – including a couple of online petitions (see below for figures), and even a dedicated website where ‘*bouncebackability*’ T-shirts were for sale.<sup>11</sup>

In all those contexts, the formation remained clearly tied to its original context of football. Clearly enough, though, the basic paraphrase is easily transferable to less specific contexts, and so it has also happened: first via closely related contexts, namely of other football matches where a team came from behind (although maybe less or more dramatically so than in the original context), then also to other sports. But then there have also been signs of real spread, i.e. evidence of use of the word outside its original sport-related domain, as a general (generic) descriptive term – e.g. in marketing and finance.<sup>12</sup> In some dictionary-like entries online, the first word offered as a synonym is ‘*resilience*’,<sup>13</sup> i.e. its meaning has levelled and thereby almost merged with an already existing, generally applicable lexical unit, with no specific ties to sports contexts remaining. This development can be seen as confirmation that there indeed appears to be something like a mechanism in the spread of new words along the lines of a cline of ‘*meaning predictability*’. The narrow contextual restriction of the original formation *in* context (‘to come back in a English Premier League football match after being one nil behind’) was obviously not so high in the ‘*ranking*’ of predictability (to use Štekauer’s 2005 analogy to the seeding system in tennis tournaments),

whereas more flexible context-independent, generic readings were, thus facilitating spread in the speech community – from just ‘the ability to bounce back in any sport’, via overcoming any sort of adverse conditions in any context, be it economical, medical, psychological, etc., to simply ‘resilience’.

However, despite such natural semantic adaptation towards the generic, this spread seems to have been limited all along (see statistics below).

#### 2.4 *The current situation – has bouncebackability lost its bouncebackability?*

The answer to this question will have to remain somewhat ambivalent. The petitions to “get” the word into “the dictionary” do not appear to have been fully successful, in as much as the word has not (yet?) made it into the OED. However, a recent (2005) edition of the Collins English Dictionary does now list it as “*n informal* the ability to recover after a setback, esp in sport.”<sup>14</sup> And for quite a while there have been entries for the formation in a few lexicographic online resources, in particular slang and neologism watch websites.<sup>15</sup> For instance, the Collins free dictionary website, though it still returns the query as “not found in the main Collins dictionaries”,<sup>16</sup> does feature an entry on its ‘word exchange’ site, in what they call the ‘Living Dictionary’, which is a site not unlike open online encyclopaedias (such as the popular Wikipedia.com) in that it is *users* who submit and comment on entries. On the Collins site there is a note that the word is “under appeal” but when you follow the link there is no more than a single comment that followed the original submission only three weeks later. This was in November 2004, i.e. at the early height of the hype – and nothing has happened to the “appeal” since.

The various online petitions have quite apparently run out of steam. The original *Soccer AM* petition only got to a meagre 817 signatures by January 2006 and has more or less stalled (on 8 May 2006 it stood at 823, and on 28 November at 825 – that is pretty close to a flatline), while the parallel *Tricker* petition made it to a somewhat more impressive 5324 signatures by 1 February 2006 (after an initial surge that got it quickly to 4477 in March 2005<sup>17</sup>) but has slowed down to almost a standstill too (5397 on 8 May 2006, and 5480 on 28 November – that is a relatively small increase of roughly 3 per cent over the last 10 months, as opposed to the still nearly 20% increase over the course of the previous year).<sup>18</sup>

Using a more general form of ‘Web-as-corpus’ research<sup>19</sup> can also provide insights. For the present study, two popular search engines were used, namely Google.com (or .co.uk) and AlltheWeb.com. Both were checked at two points in time a few months apart, and each with a few different “advanced search” settings that these engines allow, to see whether any developments over that period of time could be traced. The results are given in the following tables:

<i>Google</i>	31 January 2006	8 May 2006
overall unrestricted	<b>50,700</b>	<b>43,600</b>
UK sites only	<b>40,100</b>	<b>24,600</b>
only sites updated in the past 3 months	<b>49,800</b>	<b>41,600</b>
only UK sites updated in last 3 months	<b>24,600</b>	<b>26,400</b>

Table 1

<i>AlltheWeb</i>	31 January 2006	8 May 2006
overall (sites updated from May 2003)	<b>44,500</b>	<b>15,900</b>
UK sites only	<b>29,200</b>	<b>15,100</b>
only sites updated since November 2005	<b>40,700</b>	<b>15,200</b>
only sites updated since January 2006	<b>37,100</b>	<b>14,700</b>
only sites updated since 1 May 2006	<b>n./a.</b>	<b>1130</b>
sites containing ‘football’/‘footie’ excluded	<b>1290</b>	<b>2010</b>
‘football’/‘footie’ OR ‘sport’ excluded	<b>596</b>	<b>1570</b>

Table 1

Both tables show a decline in overall returns, though Google much less so.<sup>20</sup> One interesting exception<sup>21</sup> to that general observation is that (in the AlltheWeb search) those numbers of sites have actually gone up that contain the search term but *not* terms salient to the original reading (namely ‘sports’, and in particular ‘football’ contexts). This could be taken as evidence of the meaning spread from specific to general. However, the remaining discrepancy between the figures from searches with vs. without these restrictions is more drastic: overwhelmingly, most sites *were* still related to the original domain.<sup>22</sup> These are only indications, of course, but overall they do point towards at least a significant slowing down of the word’s spread, if not a decline.<sup>23</sup>

### 3. Interpretation and Hypotheses

#### 3.1 *A case of (attempted) ‘artificial institutionalization’?*

What is especially remarkable about this particular case is that it was not just left to spread naturally, but an online community, supported by a TV programme, started to ‘push’ the word. From a lexicological perspective this is a highly unnatural situation, one which I have referred to as ‘artificial institutionalization’ in a different context (Hohenhaus 2005:369; Hohenhaus 2007), namely in relation to similar cases in German: *Film-Film* and *unkaputtbar*. The former was chosen as the label for a programme slot for feature films on a German TV channel, the latter was used in an advertising campaign for soft drinks in plastic bottles. Through the ‘authority’ of those institutions, both words were practically ‘forced’ into the lexicon, despite the fact that ‘normally’ they should have remained non-lexicalizable (the latter because it quite drastically violates morphological rules of German, the former because it is of a NF-only special type of formation, whose results are perfectly regular possible words but not potential listemes in the lexicon<sup>24</sup>). And the institutionalization of either is indeed not ‘complete’: outside their original domains they are hardly ever used neutrally like normal words, there are symptoms of resistance against them (see the following section), and they are thus not part of the lexical ‘norm’ of German.<sup>25</sup>

*Bouncebackability* seems to me to be similar in that it is morphologically ‘odd’ (like *unkaputtbar*), and in that it received media intervention, through the Web and even television (like *Film-Film*). It is different, however, in that its first occurrence *was* natural (and not a

media or advertising fabrication like the German examples) – ‘artificial institutionalization’ was only applied subsequently, which was in itself a *reaction* to the coinage.

In any case, that in order to make *bouncebackability* established such efforts as a petition were deemed necessary in the first place is in itself symptomatic of the fact that the word is, after all, *not* ‘normal’ – no matter how useful it may be from a point of view of naming.

### 3.2 *Symptoms of lack of proper institutionalization*

It is indicative of a lack of ‘real’ institutionalization that in meta-linguistic comments on the formation found on the Web, even if they are in support of the enforced institutionalization, *bouncebackability* is still frequently accompanied by so-called hedges<sup>26</sup> such as “it may not be English, but ...” (in a chat room) – or simply by “scare quotes” around the word.<sup>27</sup>

It is also found functioning as an ‘attention seeking device’ (‘ASD’) in titles<sup>28</sup> – which is a function that relies on the fact that a certain word (or other construction or graphic device) is *foregrounded*; and that can only be something that is in friction with what is ‘normal’.

One can also argue that almost from the start (i.e. except in its original coining situation, which was rather mocked later on, together with the coiner<sup>29</sup>) there has been an element of rebellious, anarchic British humour – fun derived from undermining authority (in the form of the respectable Oxford Dictionary) in conjunction with an element of ‘subculture’ and ‘people power’ trying to enforce an item of temporary slang onto the ‘standard’ language.<sup>30</sup> However, on the other side, as it were, there can also be found open rejection, as in a comment in *The Guardian*<sup>31</sup> in which our case is even called a “non-word”.<sup>32</sup> Finally, another indication of lack of acceptance is parody, which occasionally can be found here too.<sup>33</sup>

### 3.3 *Predictions for the future*

The word *bouncebackability* will almost certainly leave a footprint – it already has made some, and the records of it are probably here to stay for the foreseeable future in the ever growing data-heap that is the Internet. It may even make it into records in other media, perhaps even into more dictionaries in traditional print on paper (if it hasn’t already done so); so even a note in the OED is not inconceivable.<sup>34</sup> But will it become a lasting part of the English general vocabulary that is in actual use? On the basis of the various (more or less independent) clues outlined above, this now seems a little doubtful again, despite its initial success. My hunch is that, in the long run, the word will only survive in small in-groups (like an old joke that is told and retold for years in established ‘inner circles’ – cf. Hohenhaus 2005: 361), but not in general English usage.

Even in its original domain, the word’s usefulness is apparently no longer felt as much as was initially forecast e.g. by the proponents of the petitions. While the latter may still have been gathering signatures, usage in the real world failed to keep up, even when the most prototypical situations arose in which the formation could really have been at its most poignant and fitting, for example after the 2005 Champions League finals. That was a historical match in that Liverpool “bounced back” against AC Milan in the most spectacular fashion after having been three nil down at half-time, then equalizing within seven minutes, and going on to win the match on penalties. This scenario should have been a feast for usage

of the word *bouncebackability* if ever there had been one. But online checks after that eventful day revealed that none of the coverage of the match online did actually utilize that fitting word on this prime occasion. Nor could it be encountered during the 2006 FIFA World Cup, arguably the highest profile the relevant context could get (of course it could be argued that this World Cup simply lacked similarly compelling displays of bouncebackability).

A final, informal clue: I have also kept asking scores of native speakers of English whether they have ever encountered *bouncebackability*. But so far I have had almost exclusively negative responses. (Even though some of these informants were football fans!) This is of course no more than an indication either (and could, possibly should, be underpinned by a more systematic and consistent survey), but, at the very least, all the indications raised in this study do not exactly suggest that the word has broken through into the general word stock.

#### 4. Conclusion

So despite its immediate usefulness in naming what had clearly been perceived as a lexical gap in English, both on the occasion of its first coining and on the part of a subset of the speech community receiving the novel word with open arms (whether totally seriously or not), in the end, the morphological “oddness” of the formation *bouncebackability* appears to have hampered its success too much for it to become truly lexicalized, i.e. part of the permanent lexicon of English. Semantically, and from a point of view of meaning predictability, it was a fairly straightforward case seemingly corroborating predictions about spread and broadening meaning. But not even concerted “artificial” efforts through campaigns and petitions were sufficient to overcome the stumbling block of an odd morphological shape.

Nevertheless, the case provided exciting novel insights into the fate of a novel word, even if it turns out to have been a comparatively short-lived one.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The briefest of terminological clarification will have to suffice here, namely that NFs are understood here as words that are not retrieved ready-made from the lexicon but are formed anew, actively, in performance (whether by fully regular productive means, or some other creative, even deviant means – ‘nonce’ here is a cover term for the whole range). For more on this see e.g. Hohenhaus 1996, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Again, no lengthy terminological discussion can be opened up here – see Bauer 1983:48, Lipka 2002, and Hohenhaus 2005 for relevant conceptual distinctions.

<sup>3</sup> But cf. Herbermann (1981:325ff) for a detailed, though completely hypothetical, scenario of how such initial spread could plausibly be envisaged to take place.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. e.g. Schmid (2005:76) for a further discussion of this important point, which is, however, also beyond the scope of the present study.

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<sup>5</sup> The most prototypical cases in this regard are what I have dubbed ‘dummy compounds’ (see Hohenhaus 2000), which function much like pronominalization in that they have no meaning beyond textual (usually anaphoric) reference. These are usually composed of an empty “dummy” head constituent (mostly *thing* or *business*) and a non-head constituent taken from that part of the co(n)text that the compound as a whole deictically refers to (as opposed to naming it).

<sup>6</sup> A concrete example is reported by Downing (1977:827): one of her informants suggested the following interpretation for her (hypothetical) compound *cow tree*: “a tree that cows *like* to rub up against” (emphasis mine, PH) – i.e. the speaker makes the assumption of a generically applicable term, unlike e.g. “... the tree next to the cow in this field ...”, which would be a deictically bound, specific context-dependent interpretation, where the informant takes the word as “merely” a NF. Both generic application and singular situational context are only imagined here, but the point is that the approach of the two informants differs significantly.

<sup>7</sup> In addition to ‘dummy-compounds’ mentioned above in note 6, these comprise: “real” phrasal compounds (with genuine syntactic phrases, which are not available in the lexicon, as opposed to listed formulaic or idiomatic phrases – cf. Hohenhaus 1996: 86f, 218ff), expletive infix formations (such as *abso-bloody-lutely* – cf. Bauer 1983: 89-91), and ‘identical constituent compounds’ (such as *job-job* – cf. Hohenhaus 2004).

<sup>8</sup> E.g. in an article by Daniel Finkelstein in *The Times online*, 4 December 2004: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7973-1386645,00.html>. There can also be found occasional expressions of doubt as to whether Dowie really was the original coiner of the word, but overall there seems to be rather solid agreement. This is only of minor importance for our purposes anyway, where the word’s subsequent development is the focus of attention.

<sup>9</sup> There are also some examples of established derivatives not (clearly) based on transitive verbs, e.g. *knowledgeable* or *laughable*, but it is highly questionable whether such patterns are productive (and thus “available”, in Bauer’s 2001 terminology).

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.skysports.com/skysports/socceram>

<sup>11</sup> At <http://www.bouncebackability.biz/> - the T-shirts do not appear to be available any longer, as a click on the relevant field redirects to an e-bay site where the item is marked as “no longer registered”. Interestingly, the original site also used the acronym *BBA* for *bouncebackability*, which can perhaps be interpreted as another step towards (artificial) institutionalization, since the interpretation of the abbreviated form presupposes familiarity with what it stands for.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. in areas as far remote from football as the pharma industry – cf. the article “Big pharma shows bouncebackability” at [http://www.pharmiweb.com/pwToday/default.asp?row\\_id=384&page=9#384](http://www.pharmiweb.com/pwToday/default.asp?row_id=384&page=9#384). There has also been a pop song of the name, cf. <http://www.toshk.com/music/bouncebackability.php>

<sup>13</sup> e.g. <http://www.collins.co.uk/wordexchange/Sections/DicSrchResult.aspx?word=bouncebackability>

<sup>14</sup> © HarperCollins Publishers Ltd 2005 – thanks to Justin Crozier of HarperCollins for supplying the exact quote here.

<sup>15</sup> e.g. <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/New-Words/041206-bouncebackability.htm>;  
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=bouncebackability&defid=823530>;  
<http://www.langmaker.com/db/Bouncebackability>



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<sup>16</sup> Interestingly also, the site furthermore declares the word “not valid” in Scrabble!

<sup>17</sup> According to <http://www.webuser.co.uk/news/news.php?id=62670>

<sup>18</sup> Current figures can be checked at [http://www.petitiononline.com/mod\\_perl/signed.cgi?SoccerAM](http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?SoccerAM) and <http://www.petitiononline.com/tricker/petition.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Almost needless to say: using “proper” corpora, such as the BNC, would be of no use here where such a recent phenomenon is under scrutiny, due to the “lag time” in corpus development. The Web may be an inaccurate basis, but in terms of up-to-dateness it cannot be beaten.

<sup>20</sup> Time-specific search queries are not as reliable as one may wish, since sites may be updated elsewhere, in places not relevant to the query, while carrying on “dead” sections containing the search term in unchanged passages. In fact, the first few result pages on both search engines looked virtually identical, no matter whether a time-restriction was specified or not. However, going through such numbers of sites one by one in order to manually filter out the junk from the relevant was deemed too disproportionately time-consuming and was thus not undertaken for the present study. The problem does indeed seem to apply less to AlltheWeb than to Google – which is also my general experience with these two search engines.

<sup>21</sup> There is also a less interesting, ultimately inexplicable exception: namely that the figure for UK sites updated in the past 3 months is higher than the one for unrestricted returns. I take this to be a reflection of the unreliability factor indicated in the previous note; and also as slight enough to be negligible.

<sup>22</sup> The number of Google hits (according to <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,27-1646393,00.html>) is relatively higher than for other neologisms – which is clearly a reflection of the online hype in 2004/2005, which had people vote, not so much with their feet, but with their computer keyboards, so to speak. That was part of the campaign’s rallying cry: use the word (however forcedly) on as many websites as possible (e.g. also forums and in chat logs) deliberately in order to make Google hits go up.

<sup>23</sup> An initial probe search, on Google only, conducted on 3 March 2005 returned 39,500 hits, so the bulk of sites were already in place then – if we can assume that the sites are accumulating rather than dropping out and being replaced with new ones. Normally, growth on the Internet isn’t that tidy, more old sites remain, updated or not, than are deleted or replaced completely.

<sup>24</sup> Namely it is an example of an ‘identical constituent compound’ – cf. Hohenhaus 2004.

<sup>25</sup> For the relevant use of “norm” in this context see Lipka (2002:112), Hohenhaus (2005:360).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. e.g. Lakoff 1972; cf. Hohenhaus (1996: 136ff) on the “marking” of NFs – see also Smyk-Bhattacharjee’s contribution in this volume.

<sup>27</sup> For example at <http://www.amateur-fa.com/Postings/2004/12/Bouncebackability.htm>

<sup>28</sup> For the concept of ‘ASD’ cf. e.g. Lipka 2000, 2002; for an example of *bouncebackability* used as an ASD check e.g. [http://www.contractorcalculator.co.uk/contract\\_market\\_bounces\\_back.aspx](http://www.contractorcalculator.co.uk/contract_market_bounces_back.aspx)

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<sup>29</sup> See for instance the following usage: “‘For me it’s just one of those days, I’ve got no fault with the performance, it happens in life,’ Dowie said. ‘We were decent in possession.’ This was an ultra-positive spin, even by the standards of a man who would view the advent of a global nuclear war as nothing that a little bouncebackability couldn’t handle” (<http://travel.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,435-2049225,00.html>)

<sup>30</sup> Maybe, the initial campaigners are having a laugh now that at least one “proper” (i.e. printed) dictionary has indeed granted the word an entry. After all, anybody who has ever seen *Soccer AM* will be aware that it isn’t exactly an altogether serious programme.

<sup>31</sup> See <http://football.guardian.co.uk/Columnists/Column/0,4284,1346053,00.html>

<sup>32</sup> Although this could, of course, be dismissed by supporters of the word as nothing but plain old purism.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Hohenhaus (2007 and 2004:319) for examples of this phenomenon relating to the German case *Film-Film*. The usage in the text quoted in footnote 26 could serve as an example of parody for our case in question.

<sup>34</sup> As of early 2006 queries on the OED online site yielded no results. But since the OED’s general approach is that of collecting *every* word in English, even including some marked “nonce”, there is still a certain chance that this might change. Even though that might make some of the old *bouncebackability* campaigners happy, I would still argue that this does not say much about the real currency of the word.

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