

CULTURAL AND PRAGMATIC EQUIVALENCE ISSUES IN THE TRANSLATION OF FOOTBALL TERMINOLOGY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Abstract: This article examines the cultural and pragmatic equivalence issues that arise in the translation of football terminology between English and Uzbek. As football has evolved into a global cultural phenomenon, its terminology has acquired complex semantic, metaphorical and culture-bound meanings that cannot always be conveyed through direct lexical substitution. The study highlights how terms such as offside, playmaker, derby, nutmeg, hat-trick, pressing and their Uzbek equivalents often reflect culturally shaped interpretations of the sport, communicative norms and media discourse. Using comparative, descriptive and contextual analysis methods, the research identifies the main challenges translators face, including semantic asymmetry, culturally loaded metaphors, pragmalinguistic shifts and the lack of standardized equivalents in Uzbek linguistic practice. The findings demonstrate that achieving accurate translation requires not only linguistic competence but also a deep understanding of football culture, discourse pragmatics and the socio-communicative functions of sport-related language. The article proposes several strategies—functional equivalence, descriptive translation and pragmatic adaptation—to ensure culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate rendering of football terminology.

Keywords: football terminology; translation studies; cultural equivalence; pragmatic equivalence; semantic asymmetry; metaphorical expressions; Uzbek–English contrastive linguistics; sports discourse; functional translation strategies

INTRODUCTION

The rapid globalization of sport, particularly football, has led to the emergence of a vast and dynamic terminological system that functions not only as a linguistic code but also as a cultural and pragmatic resource. Football terminology is shaped by the sociocultural environment in which the sport is practiced, broadcast and interpreted. Consequently, many football-related terms in English embody metaphorical meanings, culture-dependent associations, evaluative connotations and pragmatic nuances that do not always have clear or direct equivalents in Uzbek. This situation creates significant challenges for translators, commentators, journalists and researchers dealing with the bilingual or multilingual representation of football discourse. In the context of translation studies, the notion of equivalence—especially cultural and pragmatic equivalence—has received persistent scholarly attention. While structural and semantic equivalence address formal correspondences between source and target units, cultural and pragmatic equivalence requires deeper alignment with communicative intent, discursive norms and sociocultural background knowledge. Football terminology represents an ideal

domain to explore these issues because its vocabulary constantly evolves through media narratives, fan culture, tactical innovations, and international competitions. New terms emerge frequently, and many of them carry metaphorical or idiomatic meanings (e.g., parking the bus, fox in the box, banana kick, nutmeg) that challenge literal translation. In Uzbek sports discourse, the rapid influx of English football terminology has resulted in hybridized usage, partial borrowings, calques and context-driven adaptations. While some terms have become conventionalized in the Uzbek linguistic landscape (ofsayd, dribling, penaltiga qo'yish, darvozabonning seyv qilishi), others still lack standardized equivalents or require explanatory translation. This process illustrates not only language contact phenomena but also the interplay of cultural perceptions, communicative styles and pragmatic expectations among Uzbek spectators, commentators and media professionals. Despite the growing interest in sports linguistics and translation, systematic research comparing English and Uzbek football terminology remains limited. Most existing studies address general translation problems or focus on lexical borrowing; however, little attention has been paid to the deep cultural and pragmatic factors influencing equivalence. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of how football terms function across two linguistic and cultural systems. The aim of this research is to identify the main cultural-pragmatic barriers that complicate the translation of football terminology and to propose strategies that help ensure accurate, contextually meaningful and culturally appropriate rendering. By employing descriptive, comparative and contextual analysis, the article examines selected terms widely used in international football and their Uzbek interpretations. The study also explores how cultural background, media framing, fan identity and pragmatic expectations influence the perception and usage of football terminology in both languages. Overall, the analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural communication in sports and highlights the importance of culturally informed translation practices. The findings are expected to be valuable for linguists, translators, sports commentators, lexicographers and anyone involved in multilingual representation of football-related content.

MAIN BODY

The translation of football terminology between English and Uzbek is influenced by three major factors: semantic structure, cultural specificity and pragmatic function. First, many English football terms possess metaphorical or idiomatic meanings that extend beyond their literal sense. Expressions such as parking the bus, fox in the box, man of the match or pressing carry evaluative, emotional and stylistic nuances that cannot be transferred through direct lexical substitution. In Uzbek, these units often require descriptive translation (mudofaani butunlay mustahkamlab o'ynash; jarima maydonida chaqqon hujumchi; eng faol o'yinchi) to preserve communicative intent. Second, cultural conditioning plays a role in shaping equivalence. English football discourse has developed through a long tradition of commentary and fan culture, resulting in stable metaphors, chants and tactical terminology. Uzbek football discourse, being more influenced by international media and borrowing practices, displays hybrid usage such as pressing, dribling, assist, seyv. Some borrowed terms have been adapted phonetically, while others remain unstandardized, leading to variation across media outlets. Third, pragmatic considerations—such as audience expectations, context of use, and communicative purpose—determine the most appropriate translation strategy. For example, terms like derby, rivalry, relegation battle, transfer window acquire culturally loaded meanings shaped by league traditions, club history and fan identity. Their Uzbek equivalents (mahalliy

derbi; kuchli raqobat; quyi ligaga tushish xavfi; transfer oynasi) must reflect the same discourse function to maintain clarity and emotional resonance. Overall, translation challenges stem from semantic asymmetry, culturally bound metaphors and inconsistent lexicalization. Effective translation requires a balance between functional equivalence, descriptive explanation and pragmatic adaptation so that football terminology remains accurate, understandable and culturally relevant for Uzbek audiences.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the translation of football terminology from English into Uzbek is a complex linguistic and cultural process that requires more than simple lexical substitution. Football, as a global cultural phenomenon, shapes its own conceptual world, metaphorical system and pragmatic norms. Consequently, English football terms often embody sociocultural meanings, evaluative connotations, and discourse-specific functions that cannot be adequately conveyed through literal translation. The analysis reveals that Uzbek equivalents frequently vary depending on context, media discourse and borrowing patterns, resulting in hybrid forms and inconsistent usage.

Three core challenges were identified:

1. **Semantic asymmetry**, where English terms contain specialized or metaphorical meanings lacking exact Uzbek counterparts;
2. **Cultural specificity**, as many football expressions are deeply rooted in English football traditions, fan identity and league culture;
3. **Pragmatic divergence**, where the communicative role of a term—its tone, emotional colouring or discourse function—requires adaptive translation rather than direct rendering.

To address these challenges, the article proposes a set of practical strategies, including functional equivalence for conveying the purpose of the term, descriptive translation for culturally loaded expressions and pragmatic adaptation for ensuring naturalness and relevance in Uzbek football discourse. The findings also highlight the need for further standardization of football terminology in Uzbek, greater attention to media usage norms, and more collaboration between linguists, translators and sports journalists. In conclusion, culturally and pragmatically informed translation practices enhance not only linguistic accuracy but also audience comprehension and engagement. This research contributes to the growing field of sports linguistics by offering a comparative perspective on football terminology and emphasizing the role of cultural competence. It also provides a foundation for future studies exploring metaphorical extensions, corpus-based analysis and the formation of bilingual football glossaries.

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