

**PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF FOOTBALL-RELATED LEXICAL UNITS (A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES)**

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Abstract: This article examines the pragmatic features of football-related lexical units in English and Uzbek, focusing on how context, communicative intent, and cultural associations shape their meaning and usage. The study analyzes sport-specific terminology, metaphorical expressions, idioms, and commentary-based units commonly used in football discourse. By comparing the two languages, the research identifies similarities and differences in pragmatic functions such as evaluation, emotional impact, persuasion, and expressivity. The findings demonstrate that football vocabulary often extends beyond literal meaning and performs important communicative roles, reflecting national linguistic traditions, the stylistic norms of sports journalism, and the socio-cultural background of fans. The study contributes to a better understanding of intercultural sports communication and highlights the necessity of context-sensitive interpretation when translating football-related terms.

Keywords: football terminology; pragmatic meaning; English–Uzbek comparison; sports discourse; metaphorical units; football commentary; communicative functions; cross-linguistic pragmatics

INTRODUCTION

Football has developed into one of the most influential global sports, shaping not only athletic culture but also the linguistic landscape of millions of speakers. As football discourse expands through mass media, live commentary, online platforms, and fan communities, it generates a rich system of lexical units that carry meanings far beyond their literal interpretations. These lexical units—ranging from professional terminology to expressive metaphors, evaluative phrases, chants, and idiomatic formations—acquire strong pragmatic functions that help speakers convey attitudes, emotions, judgments, and cultural identity. In both English and Uzbek, football-related vocabulary has become a dynamic linguistic layer that actively interacts with social, cultural, and communicative norms. English, being the dominant language of international football reporting, coaching, and media broadcasting, contributes a vast number of specialized terms that frequently enter other languages, including Uzbek, through borrowing and semantic adaptation. Meanwhile, Uzbek football discourse reflects national linguistic traditions, stylistic preferences of local sports journalism, and culturally rooted expressive devices used by fans and commentators. These factors make the comparative study of football vocabulary particularly relevant, especially from a pragmatic perspective. Pragmatics plays a central role in understanding how football lexical units function in real communication. Terms such as *pressing*, *counterattack*, *offside trap*, or Uzbek expressions like *keskin hujum*, *ochiq o‘yin*, and *darvozabonning mahorati* can convey

tactical meaning, but also express evaluation, excitement, tension, or authority depending on context. Moreover, metaphorical units—such as *super sub*, *killer pass*, *jangohga o'xshagan maydon*, *temir himoya*—illustrate how football language becomes a medium through which speakers conceptualize competition, struggle, success, and failure. Despite the growing interest in sports linguistics, comparative studies of English and Uzbek football terminology remain limited, particularly in the pragmatic dimension. Most previous research has focused on lexical semantics, borrowing processes, or stylistic classification, while less attention has been given to how football vocabulary performs communicative functions in real discourse. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the pragmatic features of football-related lexical units in both languages, highlighting their contextual variability, emotional load, implicit meanings, and socio-cultural implications. This research is significant for several reasons. First, it provides insights into how football terminology shapes interaction in sports journalism, fan communication, and online discourse. Second, it contributes to cross-linguistic pragmatics by analyzing how two different linguistic systems conceptualize football events and express evaluative meanings. Third, the findings may support more accurate translation and interpretation of football discourse, which is important for media professionals, translators, and linguists working with multilingual sports communication.

Overall, the study emphasizes that football-related lexical units are not merely technical terms but multifunctional communicative tools that reflect cultural values, emotional experiences, and pragmatic strategies. A deeper understanding of their features allows for a more nuanced interpretation of football discourse in both English and Uzbek contexts.

MAIN BODY

Football-related lexical units in English and Uzbek demonstrate diverse pragmatic functions shaped by context, communicative goals, and cultural norms. In both languages, specialized terminology such as *pressing*, *counterattack*, *striker*, and their Uzbek counterparts *bosimli o'yin*, *qarshi hujum*, *hujumchi* serve not only as descriptive labels but also as evaluative tools used by commentators and fans to assess tactics and player performance. Metaphorical and idiomatic expressions constitute another important layer of football discourse. English units such as *killer pass*, *super sub*, and *parking the bus* carry strong pragmatic effects, often intensifying emotional engagement or simplifying complex tactical ideas. Similarly, Uzbek expressions like *temir himoya*, *keskin hujum*, and *o'yin kayfiyati o'zgarib ketdi* reflect cultural ways of framing action, tension, and excitement during matches. These expressions help speakers convey attitudes, highlight dramatic moments, and strengthen audience involvement. The pragmatic role of football vocabulary becomes especially visible in live commentary and sports journalism. Commentators strategically choose expressive units to build suspense, create narrative coherence, and influence audience perception. For example, English phrases such as *a decisive moment* or *brilliant finish* resemble Uzbek expressions like *hal qiluvchi vaziyat* or *mukammal zarba*, showing cross-linguistic similarity in evaluative meaning. At the same time, cultural differences emerge in stylistic preferences: English discourse tends to use more fixed idioms and metaphors, while Uzbek commentary relies on expressive descriptive phrases and emotional intensifiers. Borrowed terminology also shapes pragmatic usage. Words

like *goal*, *penalty*, *VAR*, *corner*, and *assist* frequently appear in Uzbek football language, but their pragmatic value may shift depending on local context. In some cases, borrowings acquire a broader or more expressive function than in English, especially in fan speech and social media interactions. Overall, football lexical units function as powerful communicative tools that construct meaning, express evaluation, and shape audience engagement. Their pragmatic features demonstrate that football language in both English and Uzbek is dynamic, emotionally charged, and closely connected to cultural patterns of communication.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of football-related lexical units in English and Uzbek demonstrates that sports discourse is not merely a system of technical terms but a complex, pragmatically rich communicative domain. The study reveals that football vocabulary in both languages performs a variety of functions that go far beyond literal description. These lexical units express evaluation, intensify emotions, create narrative structure, and shape the audience's perception of events on the field. As a result, football language becomes an active instrument through which cultural values, social attitudes, and collective identities are communicated. The findings show that English football discourse is characterized by a high degree of idiomaticity, metaphorization, and reliance on globally recognized terminology. Uzbek football discourse, while increasingly influenced by English borrowings, still maintains unique linguistic patterns rooted in national expressive traditions. Uzbek commentators often prefer descriptive and emotionally charged units, which reflect the communicative style of local sports journalism and fan culture. This demonstrates that even within a globalized sports environment, linguistic and cultural specificity remains strong. The study also highlights the importance of context and communicative intent in interpreting football lexical units. Terms such as *pressing*, *killer pass*, *hal qiluvchi zarba*, or *keskin hujum* may appear purely denotative, yet their pragmatic meaning shifts depending on the speaker's purpose, audience expectations, and situational dynamics. This suggests that successful translation and interpretation of football discourse require sensitivity to pragmatic nuances rather than simple lexical substitution. Furthermore, the research contributes to broader cross-linguistic pragmatics by demonstrating how two different linguistic systems conceptualize competitive action, emotional tension, and tactical decision-making. Football, as a universally popular sport, provides a unique domain in which language contact, borrowing, semantic extension, and metaphorization occur rapidly and visibly. These processes make football terminology an important area for linguistic study, especially in multilingual contexts. In conclusion, football lexical units in English and Uzbek represent a dynamic, culturally embedded, and pragmatically multifunctional linguistic layer. Understanding their features not only enriches linguistic theory but also supports more effective communication in sports journalism, translation, education, and intercultural dialogue. Future research may expand the analysis to digital fan discourse, multilingual commentary, or corpus-based studies to further uncover the evolving pragmatic nature of football language.

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