

LINGUOCULTURAL ISSUES IN THE TRANSLATION OF GERMAN
SPORTS TERMINOLOGY INTO UZBEK

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Abstract. *This thesis investigates the linguocultural challenges in translating German sports terminology into Uzbek, focusing on the interplay of linguistic structures and cultural contexts. By applying conceptual metaphor theory, translation strategies, and comparative linguistics, it explores how differences in Germanic and Turkic linguistic systems, coupled with cultural disparities, affect translation accuracy. Key challenges include the absence of direct equivalents due to cultural lacunae, semantic shifts from differing conceptual metaphors, and structural incompatibilities between German's compounding and Uzbek's agglutinative morphology. Specific examples from football, handball, wrestling, and skiing illustrate these issues, emphasizing the need for adaptive translation strategies like paraphrasing, substitution, and borrowing to maintain meaning and cultural relevance. The study highlights the influence of historical, social, and cognitive factors in sports discourse, contributing to translation studies, linguoculturology, and intercultural communication. Findings advocate for culturally sensitive translation practices to enhance global sports communication.*

Keywords: *Linguoculturology, sports terminology, German-Uzbek translation, conceptual metaphor theory, translation strategies, cultural lacunae, compound nouns, agglutinative morphology, cross-cultural communication, semantic equivalence, phraseological units, intercultural discourse.*

Sports terminology encapsulates linguistic and cultural dimensions, reflecting national identities, historical influences, and cognitive frameworks. German sports terminology, rooted in a culture with strong traditions in football (Fußball), handball (Handball), and winter sports, relies heavily on compound nouns and metaphors derived from industrial, military, and mythological contexts (Kühn, 2019). Conversely, Uzbek sports terminology integrates borrowings from Russian, English, Arabic, and Persian, shaped by its agglutinative structure and influenced by Islamic, nomadic, and collectivist cultural values (Abdurakhmonova, 2021). Translating between these languages involves navigating linguocultural issues—defined as the interaction of linguistic forms and cultural worldviews that complicate meaning transfer (Muminov & Rakhimov, 2020).

The globalization of sports underscores the importance of accurate translation for international competitions, media coverage, and training materials. However, differences in conceptual metaphors—such as German's "Lebensweg" (life as a path) versus Uzbek's

“Hayot yo‘li” (life as a journey), framed with distinct cultural nuances—lead to challenges like equivalence loss and semantic distortion (Schäffner, 2017). This thesis aims to identify major linguocultural barriers in translating German sports terms into Uzbek, analyze specific examples, and propose effective translation strategies. It builds on research in metaphor translation, phraseology, and terminology formation, focusing on their application to sports discourse (Toshev, 2022).

Research on German-Uzbek translation has primarily focused on general linguistic phenomena, with limited attention to sports terminology. Studies on metaphor translation highlight cultural and linguistic constraints, noting that German compound metaphors, such as “Gedankenfabrik” (thought factory), differ significantly from Uzbek’s suffix-based expressions, often necessitating paraphrasing (Schäffner, 2017). Comparative analyses of phraseological units reveal structural similarities but cultural divergences, with German idioms rooted in Christian and Enlightenment traditions, while Uzbek idioms reflect Islamic and oral heritage (Muminov & Rakhimov, 2020).

In sports terminology, scholars emphasize the role of borrowings and formation patterns. Uzbek sports vocabulary incorporates 48.9% borrowed terms, primarily from English (e.g., “futbol” for football) and Russian, with some German influences via Russian intermediaries, such as military-derived terms like “serjant” adaptable to sports contexts (Abdurakhmonova, 2021). Translation challenges include pragmatic gaps for neologisms and cultural lacunae, as seen in English-Uzbek translations of phrases like “Achilles heel” (German “Achillesferse”), which lacks a direct equivalent due to its mythological roots unfamiliar in Uzbek culture (Toshev, 2022). Intercultural studies note that idiomatic expressions embody cultural worldviews, complicating translations of sports metaphors used in broader contexts, such as German’s “Die Koalition läuft wie geschmiert” (the coalition runs smoothly), adapted in Uzbek to agrarian metaphors (Kühn, 2019).

German sports terminology, characterized by compounds like “Eishockey” (ice hockey), poses adaptation challenges in Uzbek, which favors phonetic localization (e.g., “muz xokkeyi”) (Khalilov, 2023). These findings highlight the need for context-sensitive translation strategies to address linguocultural disparities in sports discourse.

This study adopts a qualitative, comparative approach grounded in linguoculturology and translation theory. Data were collected from German sports glossaries, including terms like “Abseits” (offside) and “Torwart” (goalkeeper), and their Uzbek equivalents from dictionaries and online sports resources (Kühn, 2019; Abdurakhmonova, 2021). The analysis applies Conceptual Metaphor Theory to examine cultural mappings and employs Newmark’s translation procedures, such as literal translation, substitution, and paraphrasing (Schäffner, 2017). Approximately 50 terms and phrases from football, handball, wrestling, and skiing were analyzed for linguistic (structural), cultural (connotative), and pragmatic (contextual) challenges, sourced from bilingual contexts like international sports federations and translated media reports.

Analysis of Linguocultural Issues

German's reliance on compound nouns creates concise yet complex terms, such as "Fußballstadion" (football stadium), which contrast with Uzbek's agglutinative structure, resulting in longer translations like "futbol stadioni" that may lose brevity (Schäffner, 2017). For example, "Handballtor" (handball goal) translates to "qo'l to'pi darvozasi," incorporating "qo'l" (hand) and "to'p" (ball) to clarify the sport, but this descriptive approach fragments the holistic German compound. In wrestling, the German term "Ringen" (wrestling) is rendered as "kurash" in Uzbek, a term laden with national pride due to its cultural significance as a traditional sport, unlike the neutral German equivalent (Abdurakhmonova, 2021). These structural differences often require translators to balance precision with naturalness in Uzbek.

Cultural gaps arise when terms embed concepts specific to the source culture. The German term "Skispringen" (ski jumping) reflects Alpine traditions tied to winter sports festivals, but Uzbekistan's lack of a skiing culture results in a borrowed term, "chang'i sakrashi," which loses cultural connotations of communal celebration (Kühn, 2019). Similarly, the football term "Abseitsfalle" (offside trap), derived from hunting metaphors, translates to "ofsayd tuzoqi" in Uzbek, but the hunting imagery may not resonate in a culture where nomadic horse-based metaphors prevail (Toshev, 2022). Another example is "Achillesferse" (Achilles heel), used for sports injuries, which requires paraphrasing as "zaif joy" (weak spot) in Uzbek, omitting Greek mythological references unfamiliar in Islamic contexts (Toshev, 2022). These lacunae necessitate creative translation to convey intended meanings.

Pragmatic challenges emerge with neologisms or context-specific terms. The German "Ersatzspieler" (substitute player) becomes "zaxira o'yinchisi" in Uzbek, but in sports commentary, English-derived "sub" influences the term "zaxira," altering its rhetorical weight (Abdurakhmonova, 2021). Semantic distortions occur in idiomatic expressions; for instance, "Ins Abseits stellen" (to sideline someone) uses the football term "offside" metaphorically, but its Uzbek equivalent, "chetga surmoq," loses the sports-derived irony when applied outside athletic contexts (Schäffner, 2017). In team sports, "Mannschaftsgeist" (team spirit) conveys collectivism through a compound, while Uzbek's "jamiyat ruhi" emphasizes communal harmony, reflecting cultural values of social unity (Muminov & Rakhimov, 2020).

To address these issues, translators employ various strategies

Literal Translation: Effective for universally recognized terms, such as "Tennis" to "tennis," which retains phonetic and semantic similarity (Kühn, 2019).

Substitution: Used for culturally resonant equivalents, e.g., "Torhüter" (goalkeeper) to "darvozabon," incorporating native Uzbek roots for accessibility (Abdurakhmonova, 2021).

Paraphrasing: Applied to metaphors, such as “Der Kanzler steht unter Beschuss” (under fire, used in sports or politics), translated as “kuchli tanqid ostida” to avoid militaristic imagery and align with Uzbek cultural norms (Schäffner, 2017).

Borrowing: Common for modern sports terms, e.g., “Hockey” to “xokkey,” adapting pronunciation to Uzbek phonetics (Khalilov, 2023).

Specific examples illustrate these strategies

Abseits (Offside): Translated as “ofsayd,” a direct borrowing from English, but the hunting metaphor in “Abseitsfalle” (offside trap) is lost, requiring explanation or substitution with “tuzoq” (trap) to convey strategy (Toshev, 2022).

Handball (Handball): Rendered as “qo‘l to‘pi,” a descriptive phrase clarifying “hand” and “ball,” but it lacks the conciseness of the German compound (Abdurakhmonova, 2021).

Ringen (Wrestling): Translated as “kurash,” which carries deep cultural significance in Uzbekistan as a national sport, unlike the neutral German term (Abdurakhmonova, 2021).

Eishockey (Ice Hockey): Becomes “muz xokkeyi,” with “muz” (ice) added to reflect environmental context, aligning with Uzbek’s agglutinative structure (Khalilov, 2023).

Skispringen (Ski Jumping): Translated as “chang‘i sakrashi,” a literal but culturally distant term due to Uzbekistan’s lack of skiing tradition, often requiring contextual notes (Kühn, 2019).

Conclusion. The translation of German sports terminology into Uzbek faces significant linguocultural challenges due to structural, cultural, and pragmatic differences. German’s compound-heavy terminology and metaphor-driven expressions contrast with Uzbek’s agglutinative morphology and culturally distinct worldview, leading to equivalence loss, semantic shifts, and the need for adaptive strategies. By employing literal translation, substitution, paraphrasing, and borrowing, translators can mitigate these issues, ensuring cultural and contextual relevance. This study underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity in sports translation, contributing to effective intercultural communication in global sports contexts. Future research could explore automated translation tools or real-time applications for multilingual sports events to further bridge linguocultural gaps.

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