

# Sport Terms Borrowings: A Comparative Study

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## Abstract

The article deals with the process of borrowing sport terms in the Russian and the Italian languages; penetration of the English language elements to other languages is estimated from the point of linguistic imperialism and global language theories; active role of the English borrowings in the Russian football terminology is declared; the example of the Italian terminology is given as it is mostly independent from English borrowings; component analysis of the Italian football lacunae of semantic field “player’s roles” is made. Relevance of the study consists in expansion of the English language and its influence on the lexicon of other languages caused by its important role in modern politics, economics, sports and other spheres. Scientific novelty of the research consists in contrastive analysis of borrowed lexical units in football terminological system of different languages in order to determinate degree of the English terms penetration. In the study the following methods were used: contrastive analysis (of the Russian and English lexicon), quantitative analysis (calculation of borrowed terms in order to define percentage), component analysis (to describe semantics of lacunae of Italian football terminological system). Results of the study can be described in the following way: in the Russian language a sufficient quantity of the English borrowed football terms was discovered; at the same time in Italian percentage of the English football borrowed terms is insignificant. The Italian football lexicon contains lacunae – culture-specific lexical units that do not have equivalents in other languages; presence of lacunae, in our opinion, can be explained by historical development of football in Italy.

**Key words:** Globalization, Language imperialism, Borrowings, Football terminology, Lacunae

## INTRODUCTION

The problems of connection between language and culture are devoted to the studies of such well-known foreign and native scientists as C. Bally, I. Baudouin de Courtenay, V. Humboldt, A.A. Potebnya and others. Some scholars consider the cultural component an integral part of the linguistic researches: «Any contribution to the study of language used nowadays is impossible without considering national and cultural peculiarities» (1). Globalization of culture as “the acceleration of the integration of nations into the world system” (2) leads to changes in the language, the result of which is the process of borrowing. The linguistic encyclopaedic dictionary gives the following

definition: “Borrowing is an element of another language (word, morpheme, syntactic structure, etc.), transferred from one language to another as a result of linguistic contacts, and also the process of transition of the elements of one language to another” (3). Studies in various languages of the world (L. Bloomfield (4), W. Weinreich (5), L.P. Krysin (6), A.P. Mayorov (7)) testify that lexical units of the English language as the predominant language of world culture are borrowed most often. In view of the scale of the borrowing process of Anglicisms, many scholars have pondered over its consequences for the languages and cultures themselves.

In this article we have considered the process of borrowing Anglicisms in Russian and Italian languages in their structural and semantic aspect on the basis of the football discourse highlighted by V.A. Kiseleva because of the popularity of this sport [8].

English is considered the language of business, trade, economy, politics, and so on, which affects its influence on other languages. E.V. Shepeleva mentions: “The influence

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of one language on the other is always due to historical reasons, for example, wars, travel, trade, which leads to more or less close interaction of different languages” (9). In our opinion, it is worth adding that the media is an important reason for the active interaction of the English language with other languages in modern society, as this is the most popular way of conveying information.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

Borrowings as a result of language contacts, that is, “speech communication between two language collectives (10) can be considered a stumbling block between two points of view on the leading position of the English language in the world. The first belongs to R. Phillipson, who introduced the scientific term “linguistic imperialism,” by which he meant “domination, conditioned by the establishment and constant support of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (11). The main argument of the defenders of this theory is that “uncritical borrowing of cultural patterns and patterns of behaviour leads to a loss of cultural identity” (12). The opposite point of view is expressed in the work of D. Crystal “English as a global language,” in which he expresses the idea of “the naturalness of the process of strengthening the role of English and its beneficial influence on the progress of the post-modern world” (13).

Modern football terminology, regardless of a language, is full of English-language terms. This is caused, as Shutova A.Y. asserts, by the following reasons:

- The need to name a new sport (curling, squash);
- The need to distinguish concepts of similar content (runner and sprinter - short runner);
- The need for specialization of concepts (referee and referee - sports judge);
- The replacement of word combinations in one word (streetball - this is street basketball, stayer - runner for long distances);
- Perception of a foreign language as more prestigious, better sounding (bol, set);
- The use of borrowed words in the speech of authoritative personalities during popular TV programs, in articles of newspapers and magazines (14).

It should be noted that if the first four reasons are caused by the objective need for nomination and differentiation, the latter two are of a psychological nature, while our research shows that they are the most important in the process of borrowing.

We provide statistical information on the number of English borrowings in football terminology in Russian and

Italian languages (football, goal, goalie, winger, forward). 50 articles of Russian football media (Sport-express.ru, Sovsport.ru, Soccer.ru) and 50 articles of Italian football media (Tuttosport.com, Gazzetta.it) were selected with the method of continuous selection.

## RESULTS

A comparative table that presents a quantitative analysis of the borrowing of football terms from English is given below:

In the following tables the examples of borrowed football terms are given.

According to Table 1, football terminology of the Russian language has experienced the most significant influence of English football terminology. It should be noted that in Russian there is a complete borrowing, that is, “it is adopted as a form (using the method of transcription), and the value of the lexical unit” (15). Here is an example of a component analysis of the term “Offside”. “A player is in an offside position, when he or she is in the middle of the opponents’ half of the pitch and closer to the opponents’ goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last opponent (usually the last defensive player in front of The goalkeeper)”(16). Component analysis allows us to distinguish the “position” archiseme and the differential seme “closer to the opponents’ goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last opponent”, which completely coincide with the semantics of the term in Russian: “The player is in the offside position if he is closer to the opponent’s goal line than the ball and the penultimate player of the opponent, including the goalkeeper” (17). In Russian, there are units that can replace borrowing (e.g. winger - flank attacking midfielder), but due to the prestige of borrowing and the replacement of word combinations with one word, English options are preferable.

According to Table 1-4, the amount of borrowing in Italian is 15%. Thus, the originally Italian football terms are 85%.

The peculiarity of the terminology of Italian football can be traced to the example of both the structure (the preservation of the primordially Italian form of the word) and the semantics of lexical units that are lacunae in the English language, that is “what in some languages and cultures are referred to as “separate units”, but in others is not fixed in a certain expression” (18). To do this, we carried out a component analysis - the decomposition of the meaning into minimal semantic components - of some Italian soccer terms of the semantic field “the role of players”, chosen due to the fact that from the entire

**Table 1: Borrowed football terms from English in Russian and Italian**

Language	Russian	Italian
Amount of borrowings from the English language (%)	42%	15%

**Table 2: Borrowed football terms from English in Russian**

English	Russian
Match	Матч
Offside	Оффсайд
Goalkeeper	Голкипер
Inside	Инсайд
Winger	Вингер
Box-to-box	Бокс-ту-бок
Stopper	Стоппер

**Table 3: Comparison of Italian, English and Russian football terms**

Английский язык	Итальянский язык	Русский язык
Coach	Allenatore	Коуч
Fans	Tifosi	Фанат
League	Serie	Лига
Secondteam	Primavera	Второй состав
Offside	Fuorigioco	Оффсайд
Referee	Arbitro	Рефери, арбитр
Shot	Calcio	Удар
Corner	Calciod'angolo	Корнер, угловой
Penalty	Calciodirigore	Пенальти
Championship	Scudetto	Чемпионат

**Table 4: Correspondence of English football terms of sematic field “football players’ roles” in the Italian language**

English	Italian	Russian
Coach	Allenatore	Коуч
Fans	Tifosi	Фанат
League	Serie	Лига
Secondteam	Primavera	Второй состав
Offside	Fuorigioco	Оффсайд
Referee	Arbitro	Рефери, арбитр
Shot	Calcio	Удар
Corner	Calciod'angolo	Корнер, угловой
Penalty	Calciodirigore	Пенальти
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football terminology system this semantic field has the least clear boundaries of semantics, which entails significant differences in meaning in different languages.

In English there is the term “playmaker”, which means a football player whose main function is to pass to partners. At the same time in Italian there are several options that are similar in meaning to the term “playmaker”, for example,

the terms “regista”, “trequartista” and “fantasista”, which, however, have some differences:

- Regista – a midfielder organizes the game of the team, the team’s support, which is closer to the defensive line, the equivalent in English is the term “Deep-lying playmaker”;
- Trequartista - a midfielder, playing the role of rاسبasovschika and located between the zones of attack and midfield, in the so-called line at trequarti zone - in the English “attacking midfielder”;
- Fantasista - an attacking player, creator, largely or completely freed from defensive duties - “playmaker”.

Despite the existence of a common archiseme (player-creator), each term is distinguished by differential semes (“closer to the defensive line”, “between attack zones and midfields”, “freed from defensive duties”).

Another example of the lacuna is the term “Mediano”, which does not coincide with the analogues of the English language. “Mediano” - 1) central midfielder, 2) aimed primarily at defensive actions. In English, there is the concept of defensive midfielder, a defensive midfielder, but he is already the term “mediano” and the term “medianoincontrista” corresponds to him.

## DISCUSSION

The historical aspect is important in the process of borrowing lexical units. Speaking about the specifics of Italian football, the book “The History of Italian Football” is worth mentioning, whose authors Y. Dashkovskaya, P.Chayalo and Y. Shevchenko, assume that “only Italy has always remained faithful to its schemes and ideas” (19), thus preserving the football traditions. Terminology and its authenticity depends, thus, on cultural background of the sphere.

## CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the borrowing of English football terms by other languages, including Russian, is a consequence of the globalization of culture and, consequently, the development of language contacts which can be viewed as a positive or negative trend. At the same time, the semantic analysis of the units of the Italian terminology football system has shown the ability to preserve the national and cultural identity in the context of globalization.

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