

**COLOR TERMS AND PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS OF SPORTS JARGON:  
RUSSIAN AND FRENCH LANGUAGES**

***TERMOS DE CORES E UNIDADES FRASEOLÓGICAS DE JARGÃO DE ESPORTES:  
LÍNGUAS RUSSA E FRANCESA***

***TÉRMINOS DE COLOR Y UNIDADES FRASEOLÓGICAS DE LA JERGA  
DEPORTIVA: IDIOMAS RUSO Y FRANCÉS***

Arkadiy Petrovich SEDYKH<sup>1</sup>

Valerio EMANUELE<sup>2</sup>

Elvira Nikolajevna AKIMOVA<sup>3</sup>

Konstantin Viktorovich SKVORTSOV<sup>4</sup>

Andrey Vladimirovich SHCHERBAKOV<sup>5</sup>

Arina Gennadievna ZHUKOVA<sup>6</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** The study discusses some aspects of sports communication and linguistic worldview with due regard to national and cultural parameters. In particular, the authors of the article study sport phraseological units with coloronim-components in Russian and French. They describe various components of sports worldview in two linguistic cultures, whose key element is the linguistic personality of a common native speaker. Empirical data are analyzed and interpreted on the basis of the linguo-semiotic approach, i.e., within the framework of a discourse statement and at the level of the nominative fund of Russian and French. Sports terms are considered at the level of general linguistic and ethno-cultural dominants of national jargons. The hypothesis is that the structure of any discourse is based on the use of professional and jargon (in particular sports) terms. Their semantics correlates with the linguistic self-identification of each nation.

**KEYWORDS:** Language worldview. Sports communication. Linguoculture. Sports terms. Phraseology.

<sup>1</sup> Belgorod National Research University (BNRV), Belgorod – Russia; Belgorod State Technological University named after V.G. Shoukhov (BSTU), Belgorod – Russia; Moscow International University (MIU), Moscow – Russia. Doctor of Sciences in philology. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6604-3722>. E-mail: [sedykh@bsu.edu.ru](mailto:sedykh@bsu.edu.ru)

<sup>2</sup> CY Cergy Paris University (CYU), Cergy – France. PhD in language sciences. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7824-517X>. E-mail: [valerio.emanuele18@gmail.com](mailto:valerio.emanuele18@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Pushkin State Russian Language Institute (PSRLI), Moscow – Russia; Mordovia State University (MRSU), Saransk – Russia. Department of the Russian Language. Professor. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0883-2173>. E-mail: [akimovaen@mail.ru](mailto:akimovaen@mail.ru)

<sup>4</sup> Russian University of Transport (RUT), Moscow – Russia. Associate Professor. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8772-0056>. E-mail: [skv-kv@mail.ru](mailto:skv-kv@mail.ru)

<sup>5</sup> Pushkin State Russian Language Institute, Moscow – Russia. Scientific Director of the Center for research of media communications. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0153-9692>. E-mail: [avscherbakov@pushkin.institute](mailto:avscherbakov@pushkin.institute)

<sup>6</sup> Pushkin State Russian Language Institute, Moscow – Russia. Head of the Russian Language Arts and Intercultural Communication Department. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0222-082X>. E-mail: [arinazhukova2013@gmail.com](mailto:arinazhukova2013@gmail.com)

**RESUMO:** O estudo discute alguns aspectos da comunicação esportiva e da visão de mundo linguística levando em conta os parâmetros nacionais e culturais. Em particular, os autores do artigo estudam unidades fraseológicas esportivas com componentes coloronim em russo e francês. Eles descrevem vários componentes da visão de mundo esportiva em duas culturas linguísticas, cujo elemento chave é a personalidade linguística de um falante nativo comum. Os dados empíricos são analisados e interpretados com base na abordagem linguo-semiótica, ou seja, no âmbito de um discurso e no nível do fundo nominativo do russo e do francês. Os termos desportivos são considerados ao nível das dominantes linguísticas e etnoculturais gerais dos jargões nacionais. A hipótese é que a estrutura de qualquer discurso é baseada no uso de termos profissionais e jargões (em particular esportivos). Sua semântica se correlaciona com a autoidentificação linguística de cada nação.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Visão de mundo da linguagem. Comunicação esportiva. Linguocultura. Termos esportivos. Fraseologia.

**RESUMEN:** El estudio discute algunos aspectos de la comunicación deportiva y la cosmovisión lingüística con la debida atención a los parámetros nacionales y culturales. En particular, los autores del artículo estudian unidades fraseológicas deportivas con componentes colorónimos en ruso y francés. Describen varios componentes de la cosmovisión deportiva en dos culturas lingüísticas, cuyo elemento clave es la personalidad lingüística de un hablante nativo común. Los datos empíricos se analizan e interpretan sobre la base del enfoque lingüosemiótico, es decir, en el marco de un enunciado discursivo y al nivel del fondo nominativo del ruso y el francés. Los términos deportivos se consideran al nivel de los dominantes lingüísticos y etnoculturales generales de las jergas nacionales. La hipótesis es que la estructura de cualquier discurso se basa en el uso de términos profesionales y de la jerga (en particular deportiva). Su semántica se correlaciona con la autoidentificación lingüística de cada nación.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Cosmovisión del lenguaje. Comunicación deportiva. Linguocultura. Términos deportivos. Fraseología.

## Introduction

A sports language worldview is a set of certain components, including representations, notions and concepts from a given area of human activity. When verbalized, these components form a complex structural and semantic phenomenon that reflects the sports development continuum. The sports language worldview is a result of the evaluative activity conducted by the human consciousness during the mental assimilation of reality (BOBYREVA, 2012). An integral part of language worldview is the phraseological picture of the world which reflects the national mindset, the collective consciousness and worldview at the level of chromatic thinking. In this regard, "language provides important information about the specifics of the national worldview and national character" (AKIMOVA, 2012, p. 400).

Being a part of language worldview and a tool for representing national concepts (in particular sports concepts), phraseology is a popular research object. Despite a large number of scientific works in the field of phraseology, there is still much interest in this sphere. Phraseology reflects historical and social (including sports) phenomena, expresses the attitude of the nation to such realities, universal and ethno-cultural values, human virtues, and shortcomings (SEDYKH; MARABINI, 2021).

Sports-related idioms are often associated with an upsurge of emotion, which leads to the active formation of phraseological units and professionalisms that are characterized by figurativeness and expressiveness, as well as based on a comparison (NIKITINA, 2013).

Sports phraseology, color concepts and slang interact synergistically and symbolically. The comparison of idioms and lexemes in multi-structural linguistic continuums allows to identify the degree of their correspondence/inconsistency both in semantics and in cultural connotations (FILIPPOVA, 2010).

Color designations and phraseological units of sports jargon have been studied by the world scientific community (BLANCHET; LESAY, 2012; CHUDINOV, 2001; ELISTRATOV, 2009; KOZHEVNIKOVA, 2002; LIGAS, 2012; MAHAL, 2008; MALYSHEVA, 2011; MERLE, 2001; MOUSSET, 2010; ZILBERT, 2001). In the field of survey and research methods, there are still enough gaps and new aspects for further consideration in the framework of future schools and thinking paradigms.

In this study, we made an attempt to determine common and idioethnic features of phraseological units, in particular color terms in national linguo-cultures. The identification of idioethnic features through linguistic means is an urgent task not only for cultural studies scholars, philosophers, psychologists and sociologists but also for philologists.

Most sports idioms "adopt" the national-cultural environment. By type of nomination, they belong to figurative language. Local images that underlie phraseological units arise in the process of verbal communication among people who operate with linguistic meanings as the results of their cognitive activity. Subsequently, this figurative language is realized in a discourse, in particular, related to the sports nomination of reality.

## Methods

Sports culture is studied not only as a regulatory mechanism but also as a communication phenomenon. All its aspects are considered in the context of their communicative information (SEDYKH *et al.*, 2020).

The main methodological positions in studying sports nominations are categorical features identified at the level of the functioning of language units in discourse and communication. As a part of a specific discourse, a *sportonym* often loses its connection with a specific person or object, i.e., it loses its direct nominative function, ceases to be an expression of ultimate singularity, becomes generalized and transforms its meaning. In other words, *sportonyms* partially lose their connection with specific concepts and acquire additional connotations.

Despite the universal nature of sports phenomena, *sportonyms* are connected with the history, traditions and literature of people who speak this language to a greater extent than any other part of vocabulary. This property is manifested in phraseological units, whose components are coloronims.

The most important stage in this research is the analysis of sports terms used in various types of modern discourse. In this context, sports discourse is interpreted as an integral part of the conceptual space of national language and communication (PRUVOST; SEDYKH; BUZINOVA, 2018).

The review of scientific literature demonstrates that global philology is greatly concerned with an ever-relevant issue in the research of terminology and discourse, namely the relationship between language and culture. The manifestation of sports worldview has ethnic specifics due to various extra- and intra-linguistic factors. Each semantic-psychological and emotional-aesthetic manifestation of sports realities is conditioned by the linguistic consciousness of an individual as a generalized image of the bearer and conductor of cultural, linguistic, communicative, activity-based and behavioral reactions (BOGOSLOVSKAYA, 2002).

## Results and discussion

Almost all modern team sports use a system of multi-colored cards. These means of information visualization help referees communicate without an interpreter during the competitive process.

The largest amount of penalty cards are used in bandy. In addition to traditional yellow and red cards, there is also a white card (a five-minute timed penalty), a blue card (a ten-minute timed penalty) and a green card (a warning). In track-and-field athletics, a red card is presented to the offending athlete for false starts. In fencing and badminton, a black card indicates disqualification. The system of light signaling has been used in motor racing since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The red flag means that the race is suspended, the yellow flag indicates danger ahead, the black flag is shown for disqualification, the green flag stands for restart, the checkered flag marks finish (SHAMONAEV, 2013).

Often team names refer to their uniform colors: Manchester United – **Red Devils** / Chelsea (London) – Pensioners, **Blues** / Dynamo (Moscow) – **White-blues** / Spartak (Moscow) – **Red-whites** / CSKA (Moscow) – **Red-blues** / Werder (Bremen) – **Green-whites** / Liverpool – **Reds** / Juventus (Turin) – **White-blacks**, Bianconeri, Vecchia Signora, **Zebras** / Barcelona – **Blue-garnets**, **Garnet-blues** / Omniworld (Holland) – **Black sheep** / Saint-Étienne – **Green** / **Orange** – the Dutch team. In this case, reality is rethought based on the use of such a figure of speech as synecdoche.

Let us compare sports lexemes in Russian and French. Team sports utilize several terms from the non-codified register that emphasize both lexical and cultural aspects of the semantics of a linguistic sign (SPEAK-SPORT. GLOSSAIRE SPORT-FRANÇAIS, 2022).

We can divide all terms into three groups:

1. The identity of denotation and connotation;
2. Partial semantic matches;
3. Lexical and cultural gaps.

**Table 1** – The identity of denotation and connotation

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE
<b>Avtogol:</b> goal scored in own goal by mistake (in football, hockey, handball, etc.).	"Autobut": But contre son camp
<b>Bicicleta:</b> a technique of a soccer player achieved by throwing the body backward up into the air and, before descending to the ground, making a shearing movement (a scissors kick) with the lower limbs to get the ball-striking leg in front of the other (approximately at the level of the player's head in the standing position), and, as a result, the ball flies over their head.	"La Bicyclette", aussi appelé ciseaux retourné, retournée acrobatique voire simplement retournée, ciseaux ou chilienne, est un tir de volée en extension où l'impulsion et le tir sont réalisés avec la même jambe; les deux jambes se croisent alors dans les airs. La bicyclette retournée (tête en bas, amorcée dos au but) est généralement considérée comme le geste le plus spectaculaire du football.
<b>Kirpich</b> (brick): bad basketball shooting. An unsuccessful throw is the one when the ball did not go through the hoop.	"Faire une brique" au basket. Le basket a lui aussi son jargon. On dit d'un joueur qu'il lance une brique quand son tir vient taper la planche brutalement avant de retomber sans toucher l'arceau. <i>Brique</i> : désigne familièrement un tir manqué qui ne touche pas l'arceau du panier, mais uniquement la planche. Quand le basketteur manque la planche et l'arceau, on dit qu'il fait un air-ball. L'expression "lancer ou faire une brique" (ou "briquer son tir") en a entraîné d'autres, dans le même esprit: "envoyer un parpaing", "construire une maison" et "se prendre pour un maçon".

Source: Prepared by the authors

## Partial semantic matches

### The Russian language

ZHELTAYA KARTOCHKA = GORCHICHNIK (MUSTARD PLASTER) = YELLOW CARD

A yellow card in soccer means a warning. This euphemism is favored by senior commentators and fans. In the 1970s, when the "card system" was introduced in soccer, there was a fashion for allegory in the Soviet mass media. Therefore, the phrase "the referee prescribed a mustard plaster" was a great success and was often used instead of the cliché "the referee showed a yellow card". The British referee Kenneth Aston developed the visualization of penalties in soccer. Thanks to this referee, the language barrier does not prevent players from understanding the referee if the latter gives them a warning (yellow card) or sends them off the field (red card). Fans are also aware of the referee's decisions. The first cards were made of cardboard and resembled mustard plasters. Nowadays referees plastic cards (SHAMONAEV, 2013).

## The French language

CARTON JAUNE = YELLOW CARD

BISCOTTE (*biscuit, crouton*) ≠ GORCHICHNIK (*MUSTARD PLASTER*)

The official register is characterized by complete denotative matches, while colloquial variants do not match either in denotation or in connotation. For a native Russian speaker, a soccer player who has broken the rules deserves a "hot compress" or "lotion" as if a sick person given mustard plasters to recover. In other words, it is a medicine for a sick person.

For French speakers, the concept of "biscuit" (*tranche de pain séchée au four* = 'a piece of bread dried in the oven') is connected with a dietary regime or diet. In other words, an athlete who has broken the rules is put on a diet and restricted in nutrition as a penalty. Native French speakers also associate biscuits with treats given to patients after surgery.

## The Russian language

SUDYU NA MYLO! (TURN THE REFEREE INTO SOAP!) ≠ AUX CHIOTTES L'ARBITRE!

The expression "turn the referee into soap" emerged in the Russian language many decades ago. However, there were different linguistic variations – "throw the referee on the scrap heap". This exclamation suggested the processing of the referee's body (useless for other purposes) as raw materials. When technologies for soap production were still not so far from the consumer, a myth was associated with soap. It was believed that soap (at least, low-quality) was made from carrion. There was a special profession – a skinner. These people did business that had nothing to do with animal cruelty. They only skinned dead cattle. In a broad sense, they harvested animal raw materials (in particular, fat used for soap production). This industry was unpleasant and hazardous but quite profitable. Dead or sick cattle were sent to the knackery to become soap (the best they could do). Accordingly, there was the pre-judicial expression "turn into soap" (usually about a horse). Turn an undesirable referee into soap, i.e., send to the knackery! (OTVETY, 2008).

## The French language

AUX CHIOTTES L'ARBITRE! ≠ SUDYU NA MYLO! (TURN THE REFEREE INTO SOAP!)

From the contextual and situational perspective, this expression completely coincides with the Russian cry of disgruntled fans. From the viewpoint of lexical and cultural meaning, the French expression has several distinctive features if compared to the Russian equivalent. Firstly, the concept of "*chiottes*" has a wider usage:

1. An insult that condemns a person for their actions;
2. An exclamation to show nervousness;
3. Boredom manifestation.

Secondly, the French concept implies only the "removal" or "transfer" of an objectionable referee to the places where people answer the call of nature but not death.

## Lexical and cultural gaps

### The Russian language

**Avtobus** (bus) is a super-defensive tactic, when the whole team aims at defending its own goal and does not think about counterattacks.

**Derevo** (tree) is a player who does not live up to the expectations of fans (compared with a stationary plant), or a player who does not have the proper ability to receive (handle) the ball.

**Sukhar s izyumom** (raisin-filled rusk – slang for football statisticians) is a match in which the goalkeeper did not concede a goal and saved a penalty.

**Gorshok** (pot) is a blocked shot. It means to make a jumpstop.

**Den aviatsii** (Aviation Day) is a situation when several opponents fall for a feint and (simultaneously or in turn) jump into the air, trying to block a non-existent throw. After this successful deception, it is very easy to score the goal.

**Mukhoboika** (flyswatter) is a tall and usually central player who mainly blocks shots and is not very good at other techniques.

**Polosatost** (striping) is the same as muscle relief or a high degree of muscle development.

**Trekhtsvetnye**, lyagushatniki, mushketery, petushki (three-colored, frog eaters, musketeers, cockerels) – the French national football team.

### *The French language.*

**Les Bleus** (the Blues):

The France national football team. Russian fans are unlikely to call the French soccer players "blue" since the "*bleu*" lexeme can be translated into Russian as "sinyi" (blue) and "goluboi" (homosexual).

**La cacahuète** (earthnut, peanut):

Do peanuts grow on a football field? It is more likely that a soccer ball vaguely resembles a peanut. If a 35-meter super-powerful shot leaves the goalkeeper motionless (it is hard to imagine a peanut flying at breakneck speed), this is a great pleasure for fans. The French soccer "cuisine" also provides "*une bonne grosse patate*" ('a good big potato') or "*praline*" ('sugar toasted almonds', 'bullet' in the French slang). For comparison, the Russian fans and commentators describe "scoring a goal directly from a goal kick" in the following way: vognat myach v vorota, vkatit myach, vognat myach, raspechatat vorota, vkatit banku, razmochit schet, zabit gol, vognat banku, otkryt schet, zabit banku, zabit myach v vorota.

**Aile de pigeon** (pigeon's wing):

The term refers to a specific type of ball handling in which a player receives, dribbles or kicks the ball using the outside of the foot or heel. At this point, the leg is slightly bent when the ball is in the air, behind or to the side of the player. For French native speakers, such a pose resembles the wing of a dove and the movement itself is like a wing beat.

**Ascenseur** (elevator):

The action of a player leaning on an opponent's body to make a flying kick. This is a violation that can lead to the appointment of a free kick.

**But casquette** ('cap-goal'):

A stupid goal. This expression goes back to a goal in the Southampton v. Hull City match in 1927, when the goalkeeper S. Jaylin missed the last-minute goal due to a cap (back then, goalkeepers often wore caps during the game) that ran into his eyes. Oddly enough, the incident repeated several times and this expression quickly came into use.

**Café crème** (coffee with cream):

A type of dribbling that allows to quickly and disparagingly get rid of an opponent, using spectacular and mocking feints or deceptive tricks. The Russian football players and fans often call it by the name of the first performer: a nutmeg, the Cruyff turn, the Zidane trick, knuckleball, the Maradona turn, the Rainbow, the Rabona, etc. (RIVELINO, 2013).

**Coiffeur** (hairdresser):

In French, a player who is doomed to sit on the bench for most of the match. There is also an expression "*match des coiffeurs*" (match for hairdressers). According to a legend,

fans used this expression in response to a remark about the upcoming match at the Saint-Ouen stadium in Paris scheduled for Monday afternoon on a non-working day. Someone said, "No one will attend this match!". A fan replied, "Only butchers and hairdressers will come." In France, it is a traditional day off for small entrepreneurs, in particular hairdressers and butchers.

**Otarie** (sea lion; seal) (dribble de l'otarie = sea lion dribbling): holding the ball on the head like a sea lion does in a circus.

**Renard des surfaces** ('fox of the boxes') (ABBYY LINGVO, 1996-2010):

The nominee of a top scorer (the most accurate player scoring most goals) who can score many goals in the opponent's penalty area. The metaphor is based on the similarity with the behavior of a fox using cunning and dexterity to get into places where small domestic animals are kept. Here are the names of the most famous "foxes": David Trézéguet, Rudolf Völler, and Gerd Müller.

## Conclusion

Thus, the sports world has a technical vocabulary specific to each sport, as well as jargon, slang and cant formed by each national sports community. Lower-case sports lexemes often have a prominent linguo-cultural component. They are an inexhaustible source for identifying ethno-cultural features of language worldview and creating linguo-culturological and lexical-cultural dictionaries.

The universal features of language usage include the fact that any modern discourse is not strange to sports idioms. Sports terms reveal their connotative potential depending on a particular sports type. The basic values of sports are expressed in the speech of native speakers, covering many areas of human activity. Phraseological and jargon units related to popular sports enrich the linguistic toolkit of any national linguistic culture. Together with terms from other spheres of human activity, everyday communication in Russian and French is characterized by much attention to sports idioms, especially during global sports events such as the Olympics, World and European Championships.

In the course of the research, we have determined prospects in the development of synergistic and cognitive-communicative approaches to the study of correlations between inter-professional and inter-slang discourse using the related professional vocabulary.

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