

# The Importance of Sports Medicine in Studying the Semantic Structure of English Sports Terminology

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**Received:** 12 February 2026; **Accepted:** 09 March 2026; **Published:** 31 March 2026

**Abstract:** This article examines the role of sports medicine in studying the semantic structure of English sports terminology from a linguistic perspective. The research analyzes the semantic composition, functional load, contextual adaptation, and semantic transformation of medical lexical units actively integrated into sports discourse. Particular attention is given to traumatological, rehabilitative, and anti-doping terminology, which in sports texts functions not only in a clinical sense but also in discursive, evaluative, and strategic meanings. The findings indicate that sports medicine is one of the primary sources enriching the semantic base of English sports terminology, increasing its precision, efficiency, and degree of specialization. Furthermore, the integration of medical terminology into the language of sport demonstrates the adaptability of language to social needs and professional practice.

**Keywords:** Sports terminology, sports medicine, semantic structure, traumatological terms, rehabilitation lexicon, anti-doping discourse, sports linguistics, English language, terminological migration, pragmatic function.

**Introduction:** The rapid development of modern sport, along with its commercialization, scientification, and professionalization, has transformed sports activity into a complex system closely associated not only with physical training but also with medical supervision, biomechanical analysis, rehabilitation management, and pharmacological monitoring. This process has directly influenced the lexical layer of sports discourse: many terms that were previously confined to narrow clinical domains are now actively used in sports commentary, transfer news, coaches' interviews, analytical articles, and official regulations.

In particular, units such as injury, strain, tear, rehabilitation, recovery protocol, concussion, cryotherapy, blood doping, and performance-enhancing drugs are no longer peripheral but have become central elements of sports language. This indicates that the semantic structure of English sports terminology is increasingly integrated with medical discourse.

The transfer of sports medicine terminology into sports discourse is not merely a nominative substitution. It reflects processes of terminological migration, semantic re-specialization, and discursive adaptation. For example, the term hamstring strain, which is a strictly diagnostic unit in clinical practice, simultaneously denotes injury type, recovery time, tactical loss, and transfer risk in sports media. Thus, medical terms preserve their core clinical meaning while acquiring additional pragmatic and social semantic layers.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Sports terminology is studied at the intersection of terminology theory, discourse analysis, semantics, pragmatics, and cognitive linguistics. Traditional approaches interpret terms as monosemantic units denoting precise concepts. However, in sports language, terms frequently extend beyond strict definitional boundaries, acquiring evaluative, expressive, and strategic meanings.

This study is based on English-language sports medicine and media texts from 2016–2026, including over 100 active terminological units. The methodology is grounded in three main approaches:

- **Semantic-component analysis** — identifying core and peripheral semantic features;
- **Contextual-discursive analysis** — examining how meanings shift across clinical, media, and professional contexts;
- **Comparative-functional analysis** — determining the pragmatic functions of medical terms in sports discourse.

Additionally, a descriptive statistical approach is used to classify terms into traumatological, rehabilitative, and pharmacological macrofields.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results show that traumatological terminology represents one of the most active lexical layers. Terms such as hamstring strain, stress fracture, meniscus tear, concussion, and ACL injury express precise clinical meanings but acquire additional semantic dimensions in sports discourse.

For instance, hamstring strain not only denotes a muscle injury but also implies absence from play, decreased performance, uncertainty of return, and seasonal risk. Thus, its semantic structure consists of:

- a clinical core meaning, and
- an operational sports-related meaning.

Similarly, meniscus tear extends beyond anatomical damage to include implications such as surgery, season-ending prognosis, rehabilitation timelines, and team strategy.

Rehabilitation terminology forms another important macrofield. Units such as cryotherapy, recovery protocol, return to play, and kinesio taping are characterized by positive, expectation-oriented pragmatic meanings.

For example, cryotherapy in clinical practice refers to cold treatment, whereas in sports discourse it is associated with elite recovery and high-performance treatment. Likewise, kinesio taping often functions as a visual and motivational symbol rather than purely a clinical intervention.

The term return to play represents a complex

procedural concept involving medical evaluation, functional testing, gradual load progression, and decision-making processes. It integrates temporal, risk-related, and readiness-related semantic components.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study demonstrates that sports medicine is a key source enriching the semantic structure of English sports terminology. The integration of medical lexical units has made the terminological system more specialized, differentiated, and semantically multilayered.

Traumatological, rehabilitative, and anti-doping terms exhibit high functional activity in sports discourse, incorporating not only clinical meanings but also prognostic, strategic, evaluative, and ideological components.

Terms such as hamstring strain, meniscus tear, cryotherapy, return to play, blood doping, and PEDs function as communicative markers that convey not only medical information but also athlete status, team strategy, fan expectations, and regulatory control. Therefore, the study of sports medicine terminology should not be limited to medical terminology alone but should be conducted in integration with semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics.

Overall, the integration of medical terminology into sports language clearly demonstrates the flexibility of language, its responsiveness to social demands, and its capacity to support professional communication. This has significant practical implications for developing English-Uzbek sports-medical dictionaries, ESP-based teaching materials, and standardized terminology in sports media discourse.

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