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**AN ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES AND
ACCEPTABILITY OF TECHNICAL FOOTBALL TERMS IN
FOOTBALL MANAGER 26 MOBILE GAME**

THESIS

Submitted as One of the Mandatory Requirements for Obtaining a Bachelor of

Applied Linguistics (S.Tr.Li) Degree

Muhamad Erlangga Septyan

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**ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL
COMMUNICATION**

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

POLITEKNIK NEGERI JAKARTA

DEPOK

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PREFACE

All praise and gratitude are extended to Allah SWT for His endless blessings and mercy, which have enabled the writer to complete this Undergraduate Thesis successfully. This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain a bachelor's degree in the English for Business and Professional Communication Study Program (BISPRO), Department of Business Administration. The writer deeply realizes that the completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the guidance, support, and encouragement from various parties. Therefore, the writer would like to express sincere gratitude to:

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May Allah SWT reward all those who have contributed to the completion of this thesis. The writer hopes that this thesis will provide meaningful benefits for its readers and contribute to the development of knowledge in the field of English for business and professional communication.

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ABSTRACT

Muhamad Erlangga Septyan. English for Business and Professional Communication Study Program. An Analysis of Translation Techniques and Acceptability of Technical Football Terms in *Football Manager 26 Mobile Game*

This study aims to identify the types of technical football terminology found in the official Indonesian localization of *Football Manager 26 Mobile*, to analyze the translation techniques applied, and to evaluate the acceptability of the translation results. The method used is qualitative descriptive. Data were collected from three in-game menus: player roles, player attributes, and tactical instructions, and classified based on Sager's (1990) typology of technical terms. This study identified the translation techniques using Molina and Albir's (2002) framework and evaluated the acceptability of each translation through FGDs with raters based on Nababan et al.'s (2012) model. The results show that the most dominant type of technical term is the complex term, reflecting the nature of football vocabulary, where precise meaning consistently requires more than one word. The most frequently used translation technique is literal translation, which tends to stay close to the source text when direct Indonesian equivalents are available. The overall acceptability score falls in the less acceptable category, suggesting that while most translations are received positively by Indonesian football audiences, certain translation decisions, particularly the retention of untranslated English phrases and the assignment of the same Indonesian term to two different source language roles, reduce the overall quality of the localization.

Keywords: acceptability; *Football Manager 26 Mobile*; technical football terms; translation quality; translation techniques.



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ABSTRAK

Muhamad Erlangga Septyan. Program Studi Bahasa Inggris untuk Komunikasi Bisnis dan Profesional. An Analysis of Translation Techniques and Acceptability of Technical Football Terms in *Football Manager 26 Mobile Game*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis istilah teknis sepak bola dalam lokalisasi resmi bahasa Indonesia pada gim *Football Manager 26 Mobile*, menganalisis teknik penerjemahan yang diterapkan, serta mengevaluasi keberterimaan hasil terjemahan. Metode yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dari tiga menu dalam game, yaitu “Player roles”, “Player attributes”, dan “Tactical instructions”, kemudian diklasifikasikan berdasarkan tipologi istilah teknis menurut Sager (1990). Teknik penerjemahan diidentifikasi menggunakan kerangka teori Molina dan Albir (2002) dan keberterimaan setiap terjemahan dievaluasi oleh rater melalui metode FGD berdasarkan model Nababan dkk. (2012). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa jenis istilah teknis yang paling dominan adalah istilah kompleks yang mencerminkan sifat kosakata sepak bola, di mana makna yang tepat secara konsisten memerlukan lebih dari satu kata. Teknik penerjemahan yang paling sering diterapkan adalah literal translation, yang menunjukkan kecenderungan untuk tetap dekat dengan teks sumber ketika padanan bahasa Indonesia sudah tersedia. Skor keberterimaan secara keseluruhan berada dalam kategori kurang berterima, yang mengindikasikan bahwa meskipun sebagian besar terjemahan diterima dengan baik oleh pembaca sepak bola Indonesia, beberapa penemuan terjemahan tertentu, khususnya mempertahankan frasa bahasa Inggris tanpa adaptasi dan penggunaan istilah bahasa Indonesia yang sama untuk dua peran yang berbeda dalam bahasa sumber, mengurangi kualitas lokalisasi secara keseluruhan

Kata kunci: *Football Manager 26 Mobile*; istilah teknis sepak bola; keberterimaan; kualitas terjemahan; teknik terjemahan.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>PRONOUNCEMENT</i>	2
<i>LEGITIMATION</i>	ii
<i>PREFACE</i>	iii
<i>CONSENT OF THESIS PUBLICATION FOR ACADEMIC INTEREST</i>	iv
<i>ABSTRACT</i>	v
<i>ABSTRAK</i>	vi
<i>TABLE OF CONTENTS</i>	vii
<i>LIST OF TABLES</i>	ix
<i>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</i>	10
1.1 Background of the Study	10
1.2 Research Questions	12
1.3 Research Objectives	12
1.4 Limitation of the Study	12
1.5 Significances of the Study	13
1.5.1 Theoretical Significance	13
1.5.2 Practical Significance	14
<i>CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW</i>	15
2.1 Audiovisual Translation.....	15
2.2 Game Localization	15
2.3 Technical Terminology	16
2.3.1 Types of Technical Terminology	16
2.4 Football Discourse.....	17
2.5 Translation Techniques.....	18
2.6 Translation Acceptability.....	21
2.8 Theoretical Framework	25
<i>CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHOD</i>	26
3.1 Research Design.....	26
3.2 Data and Data Source.....	26
3.2.1 Data.....	26
3.2.2 Data Source	27
3.3 Sampling Techniques	27



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3.4 Data Collection Methods.....	28
3.4.1 Content Analysis	28
3.4.2 Focus Group Discussions	29
3.5 Data Validity	29
3.5.1 Source Triangulation	29
3.5.2 Method Triangulation	29
3.6 Data Analysis Techniques	30
3.6.1 Domain Analysis	30
3.6.2 Taxonomy Analysis	31
3.6.3 Componential Analysis	31
3.6.4 Analysis of Cultural Themes	32
CHAPTER IV RESULT AND DISCUSSION	34
4.1 Result	34
4.1.1 Types of Technical Terminology	34
4.1.2 Translation Techniques	38
4.1.3 Translation Acceptability Assessment	48
4.2 Discussion	53
4.2.1 Relationship Between Technical Term Types, Translation Techniques, and Acceptability	53
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	59
5.1 Conclusion	59
5.2 Suggestion	60
REFERENCES	62
CURRICULUM VITAE	65
APPENDIX	66
Table of Technical Football Term Types, Translation Techniques, and Acceptability in <i>Football Manager 26 Mobile</i>	66



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LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 2.1 EXAMPLE OF ACCEPTABILITY ASSESSMENT	18
TABLE 3.1 EXAMPLE OF DOMAIN ANALYSIS	27
TABLE 3.2 EXAMPLE OF TAXONOMY ANALYSIS	28
TABLE 3.3 EXAMPLE OF COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS	29
TABLE 4.1 DISTRIBUTION OF TECHNICAL TERM TYPES	31
TABLE 4.2 DISTRIBUTION OF TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES	35
TABLE 4.3 TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT ON ACCEPTABILITY ASPECT	46
TABLE 4.4 COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS RESULT	51





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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Localizing sports management simulation mobile games, such as *Football Manager 26*, is a complex process. It requires translating a large amount of technical data into the limited screen space of a mobile device. Bernal-Merino (2015) states that game localization is not merely about word-for-word translation; it must prioritize the user experience to ensure players can navigate the game comfortably. This process becomes significantly more difficult when the game relies heavily on technical terminology. Therefore, translators must maintain the precision of these terms while adhering to the strict character limits imposed by a mobile interface.

In football management games, understanding technical terminology is the most critical aspect of gameplay. According to Sager (1990), technical terms should ideally follow the principles of monosemy and univocity, meaning each term should have one specific, unambiguous meaning. However, football is also a cultural product shaped by the conventions of global and local communities. In Indonesia, football fans and gamers have established specific habits for naming tactical roles. Therefore, technical terms in a game must not only be precise but also align with the natural conventions and acceptability of the local discourse.

A primary example of this localization challenge is found in *Football Manager 26 Mobile*. Developed by *Sports Interactive* and published by SEGA, this game was released globally in November 2025 (*Sports Interactive*, 2025). For the first time in the series, this mobile version officially includes an Indonesian language interface. This game requires players to act as managers who must read tactical instructions to make decisions. Because the mobile version uses a specific game engine with high technical constraints, the screen space for text is extremely limited. This limitation often forces the translation team to use shorter words, which may lead to a distortion of meaning rather than a natural adaptation.



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Initial observations of the Indonesian version show significant issues in the translation of technical football terms. For instance, two distinct tactical roles, full-back and wing-back, are both translated as *bek sayap*. This violates the rule of univocity because a single Indonesian term is used to represent two distinct tactical concepts. Furthermore, terms such as *deep-lying forward* are translated as *pemain depan menjemput bola*, and *inverted winger* is translated as *pemain sayap terbalik*. These translations appear to ignore the established conventions of the Indonesian football community. Such distortions may confuse players and fail to convey accurate tactical information, leading some players to use unofficial translation mods to restore the original English terms.

To analyze these issues as a linguistic study, this research classified the data by linguistic form. Following the framework of Sager (1990), technical terms will be grouped into four categories: simple terms (single words such as *pace*), complex terms (multi-word units such as *false nine*), phrasal terms (longer instructions such as *shoot on sight*), and abbreviations (shortened forms such as *WB* or *DM*). Identifying these forms is essential to determine whether the physical length of a term affects the choice of translation technique and the technique's eventual acceptability among players.

The data for this study were extracted directly from the game's user interface, specifically from the "Player Roles," "Tactics," and "Player Attributes" menus. The researcher acted as an observer and collected these terms by taking screenshots during gameplay to provide visual evidence of the technical constraints.

Previous studies have explored related areas of localization. Humpolik (2017) and Florit Pons (2024) investigated how football terms are adapted in commentary and general game localization. However, research that specifically evaluates the acceptability of official technical football terminology in mobile management simulations remains limited. Most existing studies focus on action games or general subtitles. This study will fill that gap by combining Molina and Albir (2002) with Nababan's (2012) translation quality assessment.



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Based on the identified problems, this study analyzed the translation techniques and assessed the acceptability of technical football terminology in *Football Manager 26 Mobile*. The researcher served as the primary instrument for data collection and engaged expert raters in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to ensure the findings were academically grounded and contextually relevant to the Indonesian football discourse.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, this research is guided by the following questions:

1. What are the types of technical football terminology found in the video game *Football Manager 26 Mobile*?
2. What translation techniques are applied in the Indonesian translation of technical football terminology in *Football Manager 26 Mobile*?
3. What is the level of acceptability of the technical football terminology translations in *Football Manager 26 Mobile*?

1.3 Research Objectives

In accordance with the research questions above, this study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify and classify the types of technical football terminology in *Football Manager 26 Mobile*.
2. To analyze the translation techniques applied to the technical football terminology in the Indonesian version of *Football Manager 26 Mobile*.
3. To evaluate the level of acceptability of these technical football terminology translations within the context of Indonesian football discourse.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

To ensure this study remains focused and well defined, the researcher has established the following limitations:

First, the data for this study was restricted to the technical football terminology found in the official Indonesian interface of *Football Manager 26 Mobile*. The



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study focused on three specific categories: player roles, tactical instructions, and player attributes. Following Sager's (1990) framework, these terms were classified into four linguistic forms: simple terms, complex terms, phrasal terms, and abbreviations. Terminology outside these specific categories, such as in-game news narratives, player names, or general user interface buttons not related to football tactics, was excluded.

Second, the translation analysis only covered the direction from the source language (English) to the target language (Indonesian). The data was extracted directly from the official translation provided by the game developer through screenshots taken during gameplay. This study did not analyze unofficial translation patches or "mods" created by the community.

Third, the evaluation of translation quality focused exclusively on acceptability, based on the model of Nababan et al. (2012). Other dimensions of quality, such as accuracy and readability, were not discussed to maintain a deep focus on how well the translations align with the conventions of the Indonesian football discourse. The assessment was conducted through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving expert raters to ensure the validity of the findings

1.5 Significances of the Study

This study is expected to make both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of translation studies, specifically in the areas of game localization and technical terminology.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study contributes to the advancement of translation studies, particularly in the specialized field of technical terminology localization. While previous research often focuses on general subtitles, this study enriches the application of Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques by examining them in a different environment: a football management simulation mobile game.



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Furthermore, this study is also expected to serve as an academic reference for future research examining the translation of technical terminology in video games, particularly regarding the acceptability of translations within the context of sports discourse in Indonesia.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

In practical terms, the findings of this study are expected to benefit several parties:

First, for translators and localization teams, this study serves as a reference and evaluation tool for handling technical football terminology within strict screen character limits. It will provide insights into selecting the most effective techniques to avoid meaning distortion while maintaining the naturalness of the language.

Second, for game developers, particularly for *Sports Interactive* as the developer of *Football Manager 26 Mobile*, this research provides valuable feedback regarding the acceptability of their official Indonesian translation. It can serve as a basis for improving future localized versions to ensure they align with the expectations of the Indonesian football community.

Third, for the Indonesian football manager community, this study is expected to help players better understand the tactical concepts in the game by providing a systematic analysis of the official translations.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion of the analysis of technical football terminology, translation techniques, and the acceptability of their translations in *Football Manager 26 Mobile*, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Types of Technical Football Terminology

A total of 117 technical football terms were identified and classified from three in-game menus: player roles, player attributes, and tactical instructions. Based on Sager's (1990) typology, four types of technical terms were found in the data: complex terms, simple terms, phrasal terms, and abbreviations. Complex terms were the most dominant type, reflecting the nature of football vocabulary, in which most roles and tactical concepts require more than one word to convey precise meaning. Simple terms were found mostly in the player attribute section, where labels need to be short and clear. Phrasal terms appeared almost exclusively in the tactical instructions section, as instructions naturally take the form of a verb phrase to describe specific player action. Only one abbreviation was identified in the entire dataset, indicating that the game interface primarily uses full-form terminology rather than abbreviations.

2. Translation Techniques

A total of 11 out of 18 translation techniques proposed by Molina and Albir (2002) were identified in the Indonesian localization of *Football Manager 26 Mobile*. Literal translation was then the most dominant technique, reflecting the translator's tendency to stay close to the source text when direct Indonesian equivalents were available. Established equivalence was the second most applied technique, drawing on football terms already widely used in Indonesian football media. Borrowing ranked third, and its application produced two contrasting outcomes: it was appropriate when applied to internationally recognized football terms from other languages such as Italian, German, and



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Spanish, but it was a problem when English phrases were left entirely without Indonesian adaptation. Modulation, calque, linguistic compression, description, amplification, transposition, adaptation, and reduction were also identified, each serving specific purposes depending on the content type and the availability of an equivalent in the target language.

3. Acceptability of Translation

The acceptability of the 117 translations was assessed using the model developed by Nababan et al. (2012) through focus group discussion involving two expert raters and the researcher. The majority of translations received an acceptable rating, indicating that they were natural and appropriate for Indonesian football audiences. A considerable number received a less acceptable rating, primarily due to awkward phrasing, partial loss of meaning, or non-univocal translations in which two different source-language roles were assigned the same Indonesian term, making them indistinguishable in the game menu. A smaller number were rated not acceptable, mainly because translations were retained entirely in English without any Indonesian adaptation, making them inaccessible to players who are not proficient in English. In terms of acceptability, although most terms are acceptable, several localization issues place the overall result in the less acceptable category, according to Nababan et al. (2012). This result indicates that while the majority of individual translations were of acceptable quality, the presence of the untranslated English phrases and non-univocal role translations brought the overall score just below the acceptable scale.

5.2 Suggestion

1. For Further Research:

This study focused on three specific menus in *Football Manager 26 Mobile* and evaluated translations based solely on acceptability. Future studies are encouraged to expand the scope of analysis to other sections of the game interface, such as match commentary, club management features, or player development menus, to provide a more complete picture of the overall



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localization quality. It is also recommended that future researchers assess translation quality across multiple dimensions, including accuracy, readability, and acceptability, as defined by Nababan et al. (2012). Furthermore, comparing the localization quality of *Football Manager 26 Mobile* with other sport simulation games could offer broader insights into how different game types approach the challenge of translating specialized technical vocabulary for Indonesian audiences.

2. For Game Localization Teams:

It is recommended that localization teams consult existing Indonesian football vocabulary before making translation decisions, as many established terms are already widely used in Indonesian football media and community. When a direct equivalent is available, it should be prioritized over a newly created translation to ensure that the result feels natural and familiar to the target audience. When no established equivalent exists, a literal translation or description is recommended rather than leaving the original English terms untranslated, as untranslated content is inaccessible to Indonesian players who are not proficient in English. Additionally, each player role should be assigned a unique Indonesian name to avoid the non-univocity problem identified in this study, in which two different roles shared the same translations. A systematic review and proofreading process involving reviewers familiar with both Indonesian language norms and Indonesian football conventions is also advised before the localization is released to the public.



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CURRICULUM VITAE



Muhamad Erlangga Septyan was born in Depok, Indonesia. He is currently pursuing his undergraduate studies in English for Business and Professional Communication at the Department of Business Administration, Politeknik Negeri Jakarta. During his studies, he actively participated in various campus organizations and international events, serving as a Security and Health Staff for Arena of

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APPENDIX

Table of Technical Football Term Types, Translation Techniques, and Acceptability in *Football Manager 26 Mobile*

1	Poacher	Pemain Depan Dalam	Simple	Description	2
2	Target Forward	Pemain Depan Target	Complex	Literal Translation	2
3	Deep Lying Forward	Pemain Depan Penjemput Bola	Complex	Modulation	2
4	Advanced Forward	Pemain Depan Maju	Complex	Literal Translation	2
5	Complete Forward	Pemain Depan Penuh	Complex	Literal Translation	1
6	Pressing Forward	Pressing Forward	Complex	Borrowing	1
7	Trequartista	Trequartista	Simple	Borrowing	1
8	Attacking Midfielder	Gelandang Serang	Complex	Established Equivalence	3
9	Advanced Playmaker	Playmaker Maju	Complex	Calque	1
10	Shadow Striker	Striker Bayangan	Complex	Calque	3
11	Wide Midfielder	Gelandang Melebar	Complex	Literal Translation	3
12	Defensive Winger	Pemain Sayap Bertahan	Complex	Literal Translation	3
13	Winger	Pemain Sayap	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
14	Inverted Winger	Pemain Sayap Terbalik	Complex	Literal Translation	2
15	Inside Forward	Pemain Depan Dalam	Complex	Literal Translation	1
16	Central Midfielder	Gelandang Tengah	Complex	Established Equivalence	3
17	Deep Lying Playmaker	Gelandang Penjemput Bola	Complex	Modulation	2
18	Anchor	Jangkar	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
19	Ball Winning Midfielder	Gelandang Perebut Bola	Complex	Literal Translation	2
20	Box To Box Midfielder	Gelandang Box to Box	Complex	Calque	2
21	Roaming Playmaker	Roaming Playmaker	Complex	Borrowing	2



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22	Defensive Midfielder	Gelandang Bertahan	Complex	Established Equivalence	3
23	Full Back	Bek Sayap	Complex	Established Equivalence	1
24	Defensive Full Back	Bek Sayap Bertahan	Complex	Literal Translation	1
25	Inverted Full Back	Bek Sayap Terbalik	Complex	Literal Translation	1
26	Wing Back	Bek Sayap	Complex	Established Equivalence	3
27	Inverted Wing Back	Bek Sayap Terbalik	Complex	Literal Translation	2
28	Central Defender	Bek Tengah	Complex	Established Equivalence	3
29	No-Nonsense Centre-Back	Bek Tengah Tegas	Complex	Modulation	1
30	Ball-Playing Defender	Bek Penggiring Bola	Complex	Established Equivalence	2
31	Wide Centre-Back	Bek Tengah Melebar	Complex	Literal Translation	3
32	Sweeper	Sweeper	Simple	Borrowing	2
33	Libero	Libero	Simple	Borrowing	3
34	Goalkeeper	Kiper	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
35	Sweeper Keeper	Kiper Sweeper	Complex	Calque	2
36	Regista	Regista	Simple	Borrowing	2
37	Carrilero	Carrilero	Simple	Borrowing	2
38	Raumdeuter	Raumdeuter	Simple	Borrowing	2
39	Half Back	Half Back	Complex	Borrowing	2
40	False Nine	Pemain Sembilan Palsu	Complex	Literal Translation	1
41	Segundo Volante	Segundo Volante	Complex	Borrowing	2
42	Enganche	Enganche	Simple	Borrowing	2
43	Movement	Pergerakan	Simple	Literal Translation	3
44	Pace	Kecepatan	Simple	Literal Translation	3

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45	Technique	Teknik	Simple	Literal Translation	3
46	Shooting	Tembakan	Simple	Literal Translation	3
47	Decisions	Pengambilan Keputusan	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
48	Creativity	Kreativitas	Simple	Literal Translation	3
49	Passing	Operan	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
50	Aerial	Aerial	Simple	Borrowing	1
51	Crossing	Umpan Silang	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
52	Dribbling	Dribel	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
53	Tackling	Tekel	Simple	Literal Translation	3
54	Positioning	Pemosisian	Simple	Literal Translation	3
55	Strength	Kekuatan	Simple	Literal Translation	3
56	Teamwork	Kerja Sama	Simple	Literal Translation	3
57	Stamina	Stamina	Simple	Literal Translation	3
58	Handling	Penanganan	Simple	Established Equivalence	2
59	Throwing	Lemparan	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
60	Reflexes	Refleks	Simple	Literal Translation	3
61	Kicking	Tendangan	Simple	Established Equivalence	3
62	Aggression	Agresi	Simple	Literal Translation	3
63	Tiki Taka	Tiki Taka	Complex	Borrowing	3
64	Vertikal Tiki Taka	Tiki Taka Vertikal	Complex	Calque	2
65	Gegenpress	Gegenpress	Simple	Borrowing	2
66	Control Possession	Kontrol Penguasaan	Complex	Literal Translation	3
67	Wing Play	Permainan Sayap	Complex	Established Equivalence	3

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68	Route One	Umpan Panjang Langsung Ke Depan	Complex	Description	2
69	Fluid Counter Attack	Serangan Balik Mengalir	Complex	Literal Translation	2
70	Direct Counter Attack	Serangan Balik Langsung	Complex	Literal Translation	3
71	Catenaccio	Catenaccio	Simple	Borrowing	2
72	Low Block	Blok Rendah	Complex	Calque	2
73	Run onto through balls	Mengejar umpan terobosan	Phrasal	Modulation	3
74	Sniff out opportunities	Sniff out opportunities	Phrasal	Borrowing	1
75	Goal scoring ability	Kemampuan mencetak gol	Phrasal	Literal Translation	3
76	Drift around looking for space	Berpindah mencari ruang	Phrasal	Linguistic Compression	2
77	Sheer physicality	Fisik yang kuat	Complex	Modulation	2
78	Spearhead attacking moves	Ujung tombak serangan	Phrasal	Established Equivalence	3
79	Close down the opposition	Menutup lawan	Phrasal	Linguistic Compression	3
80	Get in a quick cross	Umpan silang cepat	Phrasal	Transposition	3
81	Hug the touchline	Menempel garis lapangan	Phrasal	Modulation	3
82	Surge into space	Masuk ke ruang kosong	Phrasal	Modulation	3
83	Attack the byline	Menyerang garis akhir	Phrasal	Literal Translation	3
84	Fashion chances	Menciptakan peluang	Phrasal	Established Equivalence	3
85	Final third	Sepertiga akhir	Complex	Literal Translation	3
86	Cut inside from flanks	Masuk dari sisi sayap	Phrasal	Modulation	3
87	Run directly at centre	Berlari langsung ke tengah	Phrasal	Literal Translation	3
88	Sit in the hole	Berada di celah	Phrasal	Modulation	2
89	Laying off simple passes	Memberikan umpan pendek	Phrasal	Modulation	3
90	Initiate attacking moves	Memulai serangan	Phrasal	Linguistic Compression	3

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91	Work Ball Into Box	Masuk ke Kotak Penalti	Phrasal	Reduction	3
92	Focus Play Through Middle	Fokus Bermain Lewat Tengah	Phrasal	Literal Translation	3
93	Overlap Left	Overlap Kiri	Complex	Calque	2
94	Underlap Right	Underlap Kanan	Complex	Calque	2
95	Focus Play Down Right	Fokus Bermain Lewat Kanan	Phrasal	Literal Translation	3
96	Focus Play Down Left	Fokus Bermain Lewat Kiri	Phrasal	Literal Translation	3
97	Lower Defensive Line	Lini Pertahanan Rendah	Complex	Literal Translation	3
98	Force Opposition Outside	Paksa Lawan ke Sayap	Phrasal	Modulation	2
99	Force Opposition Inside	Paksa Lawan ke Tengah	Phrasal	Modulation	2
100	Counter	Balik	Simple	Literal Translation	3
101	Roll It Out	Gulirkan Bola	Phrasal	Modulation	2
102	Higher Tempo	Tempo Tinggi	Complex	Literal Translation	3
103	Lower Tempo	Tempo Rendah	Complex	Literal Translation	3
104	Ball Retention	Penguasaan Bola	Complex	Established Equivalence	3
105	Match Tactics	Taktik Pertandingan	Complex	Literal Translation	3
106	Get Stuck In	Get Stuck In	Phrasal	Borrowing	1
107	Home Advantage	Keunggulan Kandang	Complex	Adaptation	3
108	Squad Depth	Kedalaman Skuad	Complex	Literal Translation	3
109	Scouting Range	Jangkauan Pemandu Bakat	Complex	Established Equivalence	2
110	Youth Recruitment	Rekrutmen Pemain Muda	Complex	Amplification	3
111	Play Out of Defence	Bermain dari Belakang	Phrasal	Established Equivalence	3
112	Pass Into Space	Umpan ke Ruang Kosong	Phrasal	Amplification	3
113	Offside Trap	Jebakan Offside	Complex	Calque	3



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114	Time Wasting	Membuang Waktu	Complex	Literal Translation	3
115	Overload	Bebani	Simple	Literal Translation	1
116	Shoot On Sight	Tembak Langsung	Phrasal	Modulation	2
117	xG (Expected Goals)	xG (Peluang Gol)	Abbreviation	Established Equivalence	3

