
Linguocultural features of national foods in the English and Uzbek languages

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Annotation

This study examines the linguocultural features of national food names in English and Uzbek through comparative lexicological and ethnolinguistic analysis. Food terminology functions as a cultural artifact reflecting national identity, social norms, and historical narratives. The research demonstrates that English culinary nomenclature predominantly employs descriptive compositional patterns emphasizing clarity and functionality, while Uzbek dish names exhibit morphological richness through derivational suffixes and culturally embedded semantics. English food idioms reflect individualistic pragmatism, whereas Uzbek culinary expressions encode collectivist values, hospitality, and kinship. The sacred status of bread in Uzbek culture contrasts with the utilitarian perception in English-speaking societies. Globalization triggers lexical borrowing in both languages, yet Uzbek maintains stronger ties to agrarian traditions. These findings contribute to cross-cultural understanding, translation studies, and intercultural communication pedagogy. Furthermore, the study highlights the role of culinary vocabulary in preserving intangible cultural heritage and demonstrates how food-related expressions serve as linguistic markers of worldview, tradition, and social interaction across generations in both linguistic communities.

Keywords

Linguoculture, culinary lexis, national foods, cultural code, English language, Uzbek language, phraseology, gastronomic metaphor

Ingliz va o'zbek tillarida milliy taomlarning lingvokulturologik xususiyatlari

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz va o'zbek tillarida milliy taomlar nomlarining lingvomadaniy xususiyatlarini solishtirma leksikologiya va etnolingvistika usullari yordamida o'rganadi. Oshpazlik leksikasi milliy identitet, ijtimoiy normlar va tarixiy hikoyalarni aks ettiruvchi madaniy artefakt vazifasini bajaradi. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, ingliz tilidagi taom nomlari ta'riflovchi tarkibiy tuzilmalarga ustunlik qiladi va

ravshanlik hamda funksionallikni ta'kidlaydi, o'zbek tilidagi taom nomlari esa morfologik boylilikni va madaniy ma'nolarni o'zida mujassam etadi. Ingliz tilidagi oziq-ovqat idiomalari individualistik pragmatizmni aks ettirsa, o'zbek tilidagi ifodalari kollektiv qadriyatlar, mehmondo'stlik va qarindoshlikni ifodalaydi. O'zbek madaniyatida nonning muqaddas holati ingliz tilida so'zlashuvchi jamiyatlardagi foydalanuvchi sifatida qaralishiga zid keladi. Globalizatsiya ikkala tilga ham leksik o'zlashishlarni keltiradi, biroq o'zbek tili dehqonchilik an'analari va jamoaviy marosimlarga kuchliroq bog'liq. Bu natijalar madaniyatlararo tushunish, tarjima nazariyasi va kommunikatsiya pedagogikasiga hissa qo'shadi. Bundan tashqari, tadqiqot oshpazlik leksikasining nomoddiy madaniy merosni saqlashdagi ahamiyatini yoritadi hamda taom bilan bog'liq til birliklari har ikki xalq dunyoqarashi, urf-odatlarini va ijtimoiy munosabatlarining muhim lingvistik ko'rsatkichi ekanligini namoyon qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar *Lingvomadaniyat, oshpazlik leksikasi, milliy taomlar, madaniy kod, ingliz tili, o'zbek tili, frazeologizm, gastronomik metafora*

Лингвокультурологические особенности национальных блюд в английском и узбекском языках

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Аннотация *Данное исследование изучает лингвокультурные особенности национальных блюд в английском и узбекском языках посредством сравнительного лексикологического и этнолингвистического анализа. Пищевая терминология выступает культурным артефактом, отражающим национальную идентичность, социальные нормы и исторические нарративы. Исследование показывает, что английская кулинарная номенклатура преимущественно использует описательные композиционные структуры, подчеркивая ясность и функциональность, тогда как узбекские названия блюд демонстрируют морфологическое богатство через деривативные суффиксы и культурно-специфичную семантику. Английские идиомы отражают индивидуалистический прагматизм, тогда как узбекские кулинарные выражения кодируют коллективистские ценности, гостеприимство и родство. Священный статус хлеба в узбекской культуре контрастирует с утилитарным восприятием в англоязычных обществах. Глобализация вызывает лексические заимствования в обоих языках, однако узбекский язык сохраняет более тесные связи с аграрными традициями. Эти результаты*

способствуют межкультурному пониманию, теории перевода и педагогике межкультурной коммуникации. Кроме того, исследование подчеркивает роль кулинарной лексики в сохранении нематериального культурного наследия и показывает, как пищевые выражения выступают языковыми маркерами мировоззрения, традиций и социальных отношений в обеих языковых культурах.

Ключевые слова

Лингвокультурология, кулинарная лексика, национальные блюда, культурный код, английский язык, узбекский язык, фразеологизм, гастрономическая метафора

Introduction

Language serves as a primary repository and transmitter of cultural heritage, encapsulating the unique worldview, historical trajectory, and social structures of a speech community across generations. Within the broader framework of cultural linguistics, culinary nomenclature and food-related phraseology represent a highly dense semantic field where material culture directly intersects with spiritual and cognitive paradigms. National cuisine is not merely a system of physical sustenance but a complex communicative code that mirrors geographical realities, religious constraints, socio-economic developments, and philosophical approaches to hospitality and communal life. The comparative study of culinary vocabulary in genetically and structurally diverse languages, such as English and Uzbek, allows researchers to identify both universal cognitive patterns and language-specific cultural idiosyncrasies. While English culinary discourse frequently reflects historical layerings of Anglo-Saxon roots, Norman-French influences, colonial expansions, and pragmatic socio-economic values, Uzbek culinary vocabulary is profoundly anchored in nomadic and sedentary agricultural syntheses, Islamic dietary ethics, Eastern hospitality rituals, and deep-seated familial collectivism. By analyzing how national dishes are lexicalized, idiomatized, and metaphoricalized in these two linguistic

traditions, this paper aims to decipher the underlying cultural codes embedded within their respective lexicons. The urgency of this study is underscored by the rapid processes of globalization and cross-cultural communication, which demand a deeper understanding of how specific national identities preserve their unique conceptual worldviews through traditional gastronomic systems.

Literature review and Methodology

The theoretical foundation of this study is rooted in the principles of modern cultural linguistics (linguoculture) and cognitive semantics, established by scholars who view language as an organic component of culture. The intricate relationship between language, thought, and national character has been extensively explored in general linguistics, emphasizing how vocabulary reflects the material world (Palmer, 1996). In the context of Uzbek linguistics, the systematic investigation of culinary vocabulary from ethnolinguistic and socio-cultural perspectives has gained significant traction, showing how food items reflect the historical lifestyle of the Uzbek people (Mahmudov, 2021). Similarly, in Western linguistics, food terms are analyzed not merely as nutritional items but as complex cultural texts that embody historical shifts, class distinctions, and social identities within the English-speaking world (Anderson, 2005). These theoretical frameworks provide the necessary tools to analyze gastronomic

vocabulary as a crucial marker of national identity.

The methodological apparatus of this research employs a descriptive, comparative, and contextual analysis of culinary units extracted from lexicographic sources, literary texts, and corpora of both languages. The conceptual contrastive method is applied to identify how physical food objects undergo secondary semiotization, transforming into abstract linguistic metaphors and phraseological units. Component analysis is utilized to break down the semantic structure of food names to uncover hidden cultural connotations, while statistical distribution helps establish the structural frequency of certain culinary elements in everyday discourse. By applying these integrated methods, the study systematically tracks how specific physical dishes evolve into potent symbolic containers of national values and historical memories within English and Uzbek societies.

Discussion and Results

The linguistic structuralization of national foods reveals profound differences in how English and Uzbek societies conceptualize their material environments. In the English language, traditional dishes such as “Yorkshire pudding,”

“Shepherd’s pie,” “Fish and chips,” and “Haggis” carry dense historical and regional connotations. For instance, “Shepherd’s pie” directly mirrors the historical agrarian lifestyle of rural Britain, where the choice of meat (mutton or lamb) reflects the occupational identity of the pastoral class. On the other hand, the Uzbek culinary vocabulary is remarkably rich in terms relating to grain cultivation, livestock breeding, and specific technological processes of cooking, such as steaming, baking in a clay oven (*tandir*), and slow-boiling. Words like *palov*, *sumalak*, *manti*, *shurva*, and *shashlik* are not simple labels for food; they signify complex social institutions. The term *palov* (pilaf), for example, is structurally embedded in the social fabric through rituals like *nahorga osh* (morning pilaf for weddings), demonstrating that a single culinary lexeme can regulate social gatherings and communal obligations (Axmedov, 2023).

To illustrate the structural and conceptual differences between the two gastronomic vocabularies, Table 1 provides a comparative overview of core national foods and their primary socio-cultural functions in English and Uzbek cultures (Turner, 2020).

Language	National Food Item	Primary Ingredients	Cooking Technology	Dominant Cultural Connotation / Social Function
English	Yorkshire Pudding	Flour, eggs, milk	Baked in meat fat	Regional identity (Yorkshire), traditional Sunday roast ritual, resourcefulness in using meat drippings
English	Shepherd’s Pie	Minced lamb, mashed potatoes	Baking / Layering	Rural pastoral history, domestic thrift, comfort food signifying working-class domesticity.
Uzbek	Palov (Pilaf)	Rice, meat, carrots, onions	Layered simmering in a <i>qozon</i>	National unity, sacred hospitality, masculine cooking ritual, central component of life-cycle rituals.
Uzbek	Sumalak	Wheat sprouts, flour, water	Prolonged collective boiling	Vernal equinox (Navruz), sacred communal labor, spirituality, wishes for prosperity and abundance.

Table 1. Structural and Socio-Cultural Paradigm of National Foods

The secondary semiotization of food terms manifests heavily in the domain of phraseology and idioms. In English, the high frequency of terms like *bread*, *cake*, *meat*, and *potatoes* in idiomatic expressions highlights a historically pragmatic and individualistic approach to socio-economic survival. For example, the expression “to earn one’s bread” or “the breadwinner” equates the basic staple with financial survival, while “piece of cake” denotes ease of execution. Conversely, Uzbek food phraseology heavily utilizes concepts surrounding *non* (bread), *tuz* (salt), and *osh* (pilaf), reflecting an Eastern collective

consciousness, deep respect for sustenance, and ethical obligations of loyalty. The Uzbek phrase *nonini yarimta qilmoq* (to cut someone’s bread in half) signifies depriving someone of their livelihood, while *tuzini yeb, tuzlig’iga tupurmoq* (to eat someone’s salt and spit into the salt shaker) denotes the highest form of moral betrayal and ungratefulness (Nafisa, 2025).

Table 2 systematically contrasts the metaphorical shifts of food-related idioms in both languages to reveal their underlying psychological and ethical values.

Language	Idiomatic Expression	Literal Translation	Figurative Meaning	Underlying Cultural Value / Cognitive Code
English	“To know which side one’s bread is buttered”	Nonning qaysi tomoniga sariyog’ surtilganini bilmoq	To know where one’s clear financial or personal advantage lies.	Individualism, pragmatism, economic calculation
English	“To take something with a grain of salt”	Nimandir bir zarracha tuz bilan qabul qilmoq	To view a statement with skepticism or reservation.	Rationalism, intellectual caution, analytical thinking.
Uzbek	“Oshini yeb, yoshini yashagan”	Having eaten his pilaf and lived his years	A person who is highly experienced, wise, and elderly.	Respect for old age, life experience measured through communal food sharing
Uzbek	“Bir kun tuz ichgan joyingga qirq kun salom ber”	Greet for forty days the place where you drank salt for one day	Always show gratitude and loyalty to those who have hosted or helped you.	Absolute loyalty, sacredness of hospitality, moral duty

Table 2. *Metaphorical Mapping of Food Idioms in English and Uzbek*

The linguistic structuralization and etymological development of national food names reveal profound differences in how English and Uzbek societies have historically interacted with their material environments and absorbed external cultural influences over centuries. In the English language, traditional dishes such as “Yorkshire pudding,” “Shepherd’s pie,” “Fish and chips,” and “Haggis”

carry dense historical, regional, and social connotations that trace back to specific socio-economic conditions and class structures. For instance, “Shepherd’s pie” and its variant “Cottage pie” directly mirror the historical agrarian lifestyle of rural Britain, where the choice of meat (mutton or lamb versus beef) reflects the occupational identity, geography, and economic constraints of the pastoral

working class. Furthermore, the English culinary lexicon exhibits a stark socio-linguistic duality resulting from the Norman Conquest of 1066, where the animals kept by Anglo-Saxon peasants retain Germanic names (cow, pig, sheep), while the cooked meat consumed by the French-speaking aristocracy is designated by words of Romance origin (beef, pork, mutton), demonstrating how linguistic stratification mirrors historical class divisions (Turner, 2020).

On the other hand, the Uzbek culinary vocabulary is remarkably rich, uniform, and deeply expressive in terms relating to grain cultivation, livestock breeding, viticulture, and highly specific technological processes of traditional cooking, such as steaming (*manti*), baking in a sacred clay oven (*tandir*), and slow-boiling over open fires. Words like *palov*, *sumalak*, *manti*, *shurva*, *naryn*, and *shashlik* are not simple labels for food; they signify complex, deeply embedded social institutions and historical syntheses of nomadic cattle-rearing culture and sedentary oasis agriculture. The term *palov* (*pilaf*), for example, is structurally embedded in the social fabric through institutionalized rituals like *nahorga osh* (morning *pilaf* for hundreds of guests during weddings and life-cycle events), demonstrating that a single culinary lexeme can regulate social gatherings, communal financial obligations, and neighborhood solidarity (*mahalla*). To illustrate the structural, etymological, and conceptual differences between these two gastronomic vocabularies, Table 1 provides a comparative overview of core national foods and their primary socio-cultural functions in English and Uzbek cultures.

The secondary semiotization of food terms, where literal culinary items shift into figurative concepts, manifests heavily and uniquely in the domain of phraseology, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions in both languages. In the English language, the high frequency of basic terms like bread, cake, meat, potatoes, and butter in idiomatic expressions highlights a historically pragmatic, commercial,

and individualistic approach to socio-economic survival, material success, and personal space. For example, the deeply rooted expression “to earn one’s bread” or “the breadwinner” directly equates the basic carbohydrate staple with financial survival and individual labor responsibility, while expressions like “piece of cake” or “as easy as pie” denote ease of execution, reflecting a utilitarian evaluation of tasks. Furthermore, the English phrase “to have one’s cake and eat it too” highlights a logical, rationalist approach to choice, resource allocation, and personal dilemma, showing how culinary metaphors serve to evaluate abstract logical contradictions.

Conversely, Uzbek food phraseology and proverbial systems heavily utilize concepts surrounding *non* (bread), *tuz* (salt), *osh* (*pilaf*), and *shakar* (sugar), reflecting an Eastern collective consciousness, profound religious and mystical respect for sustenance (*uvol*), and strict ethical obligations of loyalty, hospitality, and communal harmony. The Uzbek phrase *nonini yarimta qilmoq* (to cut someone’s bread in half) signifies depriving someone of their livelihood through unfair means, while *tuzini yeb, tuzlig’iga tupurmoq* (to eat someone’s salt and spit into the salt shaker) denotes the highest, most unforgivable form of moral betrayal, treason, and ungratefulness within the culture. Bread (*non*) is conceptualized as a sacred object (*ko’zga surtmoq* – to press to the eyes in reverence), and its presence in idioms always elevates the discourse to matters of life, death, oaths, and honor.

The comparative data underscores that while English gastronomic metaphors frequently lean toward individual economic navigation and intellectual skepticism, Uzbek gastronomic metaphors are primarily directed toward maintaining social harmony, reinforcing interpersonal ethics, and expressing reverence for age and community bonds (Nafisa, 2025).

Conclusion

The comparative linguocultural analysis of national food vocabulary in the English and Uzbek languages reveals how deeply

gastronomic terms are woven into the cultural fabrics of these societies. Culinary lexis goes far beyond physical descriptions of food; it serves as a powerful mirror for a nation's historical journey, geographical environment, and core social values. In English, food names and idioms often carry historical markers of regional pride, social class divisions, and a highly pragmatic approach to daily life and economic survival. In sharp contrast, Uzbek culinary vocabulary is deeply rooted in a collective, community-oriented worldview. It highlights the sacred nature of hospitality, respects social hierarchies, and

places strong emphasis on mutual ethical duties, as seen in the deep reverence for bread and shared meals. The way idioms use food words in both languages clearly shows these differing cultural viewpoints – shifting between British individualism and rationalism on one side, and Uzbek communal unity and deep loyalty on the other. Ultimately, studying these expressions shows that food terms operate as a vital cultural shorthand. Preserving and understanding these linguistic features is essential for true cross-cultural communication in an increasingly interconnected world.

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