JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES AND INNOVATIONS
GERMAN INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS COMPANY
ISSN: 2751-4390
IMPACT FACTOR (RESEARCH BIB) : 9,08. Academic research index

HOW FOOD VOCABULARY REFLECTS CULTURAL VALUES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH

Hojiyeva Mehrangiz G'ayrat kizi
ESP teacher, Bukhara State Medical Institute named after Abu Ali ibn Sino, Bukhara, Uzbekistan
hojiyeva.mehrangiz@bsmi.uz
hojiyevamehrangiz@gmail.com

Abstract: This article explores how food-related vocabulary reflects and preserves cultural values in Uzbek and English-speaking societies through the lens of linguoculturology. By analyzing lexical items, idiomatic expressions, and cultural practices associated with food, the study reveals the symbolic and communicative functions of food terms in both languages. The comparative analysis highlights how linguistic representations of food serve as vehicles for expressing identity, social relationships, and philosophical worldviews. The findings underscore the role of food vocabulary as a repository of cultural meaning, reinforcing the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in understanding language and culture.

Keywords: Linguoculturology, food vocabulary, Uzbek language, English language, cultural values, idioms, cultural identity

Introduction. Linguoculturology, a field at the intersection of linguistics and cultural studies, examines how language both reflects and shapes cultural identity. It posits that language is not merely a tool for communication but a repository of the collective values, norms, and experiences of a society (Wierzbicka, 1997; Stepanov, 2015). One of the most culturally loaded domains of vocabulary is that related to food—an everyday necessity that transcends biological needs to encompass symbolic, ritualistic, and identity-forming functions. Food language, from basic lexical units to metaphorical expressions, offers a unique lens through which to explore how cultural concepts are encoded in linguistic forms.

This study investigates how food-related vocabulary in Uzbek and English reflects the respective cultural values, social norms, and worldviews of these societies. By focusing on idiomatic usage, traditional culinary terms, and metaphorical expressions, the research demonstrates how food vocabulary functions as a mirror of national identity, social structures, and philosophical outlooks.

Literature Review. Previous studies have highlighted the linguistic encoding of cultural practices through food-related lexicons. Wierzbicka (1997) emphasized the importance of culturally salient concepts such as "bread", "meat", and "salt" in shaping conceptual universes. Stepanov (2015) further examined the symbolic nature of food in language, noting that culinary references often bear strong associative meanings related to heritage, morality, and community. Expanding on this, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued that metaphorical conceptualizations rooted in bodily experience—such as "a sweet deal" or "biting off more than one can chew"—demonstrate how food is not only a literal necessity but also a cognitive foundation for abstract reasoning. These metaphors link physiological experience to socio-cultural narratives, showing that language users unconsciously project cultural values onto food-related expressions.

In the context of Central Asian linguocultural studies, several scholars have examined the role of

food-related idioms in conveying cultural values. Tagayeva (2023) provides a comparative analysis of English and Uzbek culinary idioms, highlighting their cultural significance. Radjabova (2024) delves into the symbolic roles of food in Uzbek proverbs, emphasizing their function in imparting moral lessons and reinforcing social cohesion. Uralova (2024) explores the interplay between language and culture through gastronomic phraseology in Uzbek, demonstrating how these expressions reflect societal norms and traditions. Additionally, Vakhobova and Akhmadjonova (2023) conduct a comparative study of food-related proverbs in English and Uzbek, revealing insights into national mentalities and cultural customs. Saidakbarova (2022) discusses the significance of gastronomic idioms in reflecting ethnic and cultural identities, analyzing expressions in both languages that encapsulate historical and religious influences.

Despite these contributions, comparative analyses between Uzbek and English food lexicons remain underexplored, especially from a linguoculturological perspective. This study seeks to fill that gap by offering a comparative framework to interpret cultural meaning embedded in food-related language.

Methodology. This study employs a qualitative, descriptive, and comparative methodology rooted in the principles of linguoculturology. By examining a diverse range of sources—including primary food-related vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and cultural practices—drawn from both Uzbek and English contexts, the research aims to uncover the deeper cultural meanings embedded in food language. Literary works, dictionaries, proverbs, and ethnographic materials provided a rich basis for data collection. Through a cross-linguistic comparison, the study highlights both the shared and divergent ways in which food is conceptualized, revealing its pivotal role in shaping cultural identity and social values across the two linguistic traditions.

Analysis. Uzbek Food Vocabulary and Cultural Values

In Uzbek culture, certain foods hold a sacred status. For example, *non* (bread) is more than a dietary staple—it symbolizes life, hospitality, and divine blessing. Expressions such as *non sindirish* (breaking bread) reflect deep communal values and reverence for food as a gift from the divine. The phrase *tuz-nasiba* (salt and destiny) intertwines nourishment with fate, implying that sharing food is a spiritually significant act. The *O‘zbek tilining izohli lug‘ati* (2023) defines *tuz-nasiba* as follows: "Go‘yo taqdirda belgilangan rizqi ro‘z, nasiba" (“As if the sustenance and provision determined by fate”). An illustrative example comes from H. Sultonov’s *Onamning yurti*: “Umri uzoq ekanmi, tuz-nasiba tortibmi, bir oyoqda bo‘lsa hamki, qaytib keldi” (“Whether it was due to a long life or fate’s provision, he returned—even on one leg”).

Culinary traditions such as preparing “osh” (pilaf) for guests during weddings and funerals reinforce food’s role in maintaining social cohesion and celebrating life’s transitions. Proverbs like “Tuz yegan joyingda tuzga sodiq bo‘l” (“Be loyal to the place where you ate salt”) reflect a moral obligation tied to shared sustenance.

English Food Vocabulary and Cultural Values

In English, food metaphors frequently convey abstract concepts such as success, simplicity, or difficulty. Phrases like “bringing home the bacon” denote economic provision, while “a piece of cake” indicates ease. These idioms reflect an individualistic, goal-oriented worldview common in Anglo-American cultures.

Traditional food practices like *afternoon tea* symbolize refinement, ritual, and politeness—values associated with British social etiquette. Similarly, the metaphor *food for thought*

highlights the epistemological link between sustenance and cognition, emphasizing food as a medium for intellectual and emotional reflection.

Cross-Cultural Comparisons

Conceptual Focus	Uzbek culture	English culture
Sacred Foods	Non, tuz	Bread (Biblical), bacon
Communal Values	Osh, non sindirish	tea parties, sunday roasts
Idioms	Tuz-nasiba, Tuz yegan joyingda tuzga sodiq bo'l	Piece of cake, "butter someone up
Symbolism	Hospitality, destiny	Achievement, refinement

This comparative matrix shows that while both cultures use food language to articulate values, Uzbek expressions tend to emphasize collectivism and spiritual significance, whereas English idioms often prioritize individualism, achievement, and emotional nuance.

Discussion. The findings suggest that food-related vocabulary serves not only as a linguistic reflection of material culture but also as a symbolic system embedded in worldview. In Uzbek, the use of food idioms foregrounds concepts such as divine providence, community obligation, and respect. In English, the metaphorical extensions of food lexicon reflect more abstract cognitive and social values such as efficiency, ease, and success.

From a linguoculturological standpoint, food vocabulary bridges tangible experience and intangible belief systems. It encodes historical experiences (e.g., agricultural practices in Uzbekistan, industrial development in England) and maps them onto daily language use. These insights confirm the value of interdisciplinary approaches that combine linguistics, anthropology, and cultural studies.

Conclusion. Food vocabulary in Uzbek and English exemplifies the intricate relationship between language and culture. While the Uzbek lexicon foregrounds community, hospitality, and fate through reverence for foods like bread and salt, English food idioms reflect a more individualistic and metaphor-driven interpretation of success and effort. The study affirms the potential of linguoculturology to reveal deep-seated cultural values embedded in everyday language and calls for further comparative studies across diverse linguistic traditions.

References

1. Radjabova, A. T. (2024). *Semantic parallelism in Uzbek food names and proverbs*. Ethiopian International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 11(12), 504–506. https://www.eijmr.org/index.php/eijmr/article/view/2344

2. Saidakbarova, S. (2022). *Classification of English and Uzbek idioms depending on gastronomic codes*. Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, 12(5), 51–55. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361722248

3. Tagayeva, U. E. (2023). *A culinary journey through languages: Comparative linguistic analysis of food-related idioms in English and Uzbek languages*. Multidisciplinary Journal of Science and Technology, 3(5), 124–131. https://mjstjournal.com/index.php/mjst/article/view/444

4. Uralova, N. A. (2024). *Linguocultural study of gastronomic phraseology in the Uzbek language*. Next Scientists Conferences, 1(01), 218–220. https://nextscientists.com/index.php/science-conf/article/view/414

5. Vakhobova, D. F. kizi, & Akhmadjonova, S. (2023). *Linguocultural study of the term*

"food" in English and Uzbek languages. Innovative Development in Educational Activities, 2(11), 217–223. https://openidea.uz/index.php/idea/article/view/1412

6. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
7. Stepanov, Y. (2015). *Constants: Dictionary of culture and language* (in Russian). Akademicheskiy Proyekt.
8. Wierzbicka, A. (1997). *Understanding cultures through their key words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese*. Oxford University Press.
9. G'ayrat qizi, H. M. . (2025). From Idioms to Ingredients: Unveiling the Connection between Food Lexicon and National Identity in English and Uzbek. *International Journal of Formal Education*, *4*(2), 97–100. Retrieved from https://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/ijfe/article/view/4496
10. Hojiyeva , M. . (2024). A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOOD LEXICON IN THE ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL IDENTITY AND GLOBALIZATION. Академические исследования в современной науке, 3(34), 76–81. извлечено от http://econferences.ru/index.php/arims/article/view/19645
11. qizi, H. M. G. (2024). Integrating English Teaching to Develop Professional Thinking in Medical Education. *Best Journal of Innovation in Science, Research and Development*, *3*(5), 377–386. Retrieved from https://www.bjisrd.com/index.php/bjisrd/article/view/2301