

**“FOOD TERMINOLOGY AS A REFLECTION OF NATIONAL
CULTURE”**

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Abstract: *In modern linguistics, increasing attention is being paid to the social, cultural, and communicative functions of language in human life and society. One of the key areas of focus is the study of terminology, not merely as lexical or grammatical units, but as conceptual elements intertwined with cultural reality. Among such terminological layers, food-related terms play a vital role in revealing the linguocultural resources of the Uzbek and English languages. The food culture, national dishes, and related terminology of any given nation reflect the worldview, historical development, and national identity of that people. This paper discusses the theoretical and methodological foundations of food terminology, exploring its structural, semantic, and cultural aspects within English and Uzbek. The interdisciplinary nature of food terminology is also emphasized, showcasing the necessity of integrating approaches from linguistics, cultural studies, sociolinguistics, and translation studies.*

Keywords: *Terminology, food culture, linguocultural studies, translation, national identity, lexical semantics, conceptual analysis, English, Uzbek, language and culture.*

Introduction

At the new stages of development in contemporary linguistics, the study of language in relation to its social, cultural, and communicative functions in human life has become increasingly relevant. Particularly, in examining the terminological layer of language, there is a growing need to consider terminology not only as a lexical-semantic or grammatical unit but also as a conceptual category closely



connected with cultural reality. One of the most significant terminological domains in this regard is food terminology, which holds special importance in uncovering the linguocultural resources of both the Uzbek and English languages.

Every nation's food culture, national dishes, and related terminology are products of its historical development, national mentality, and collective worldview. In linguistics, the term "terminology" is defined as the precise naming of a specific object, event, or concept within a particular scientific or professional field. Food terminology, accordingly, forms a specialized lexical system influenced by gastronomic, biological, chemical, technological, and cultural factors. Its emergence and use follow specific linguistic and cultural patterns.

Theoretical Perspectives on Terminology

Notable scholars such as A.A. Reformatsky, S.V. Grinev-Grinevsky, R. Abudov, and Sh. Safarov have conducted in-depth analyses of the structural and semantic properties of terminology. Recent research, however, increasingly emphasizes the linguocultural aspects of terminology. As noted by Temmerman and Van Campenhout (2014), modern terminological studies are becoming more hybrid and interdisciplinary, incorporating methodologies from cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics, sociolinguistics, semiotics, pragmatics, intercultural communication, and ethnography. These perspectives are especially relevant for domains like food terminology, which carry deep sociocultural meanings. Food is not only a physiological necessity but also an integral part of culture, values, customs, and national identity. This is evident in the naming and use of food terms across different cultures.

Language, Culture, and Food Terminology

According to Chiaro and Rossato (2015), food is inseparably linked to culture. The traditional definition of culture—as a set of beliefs, values, and behaviors accepted and practiced by a community (Almerico, 2014)—has become increasingly complex in linguocultural studies. Culture is now viewed as a dynamic process shaped by interpersonal communication, which complicates its objective analysis and demands deeper understanding of the cultural load carried by linguistic



units. In Uzbek linguistics, language and culture are considered interdependent and harmonious processes. A.

Abduazizov, for example, interprets language as a product of national thinking and culture. D. Ashurova and Sh. Safarov have explored the linguistic-pragmatic and sociocultural dimensions of language in intercultural communication. S. Muminov emphasizes the link between lexical-semantic units and national culture, associating food-related terminology with historical memory and customs. Sh. Iskandarova and M. Sulaymonov have analyzed meaning shifts, interpretation, and equivalence problems in translating linguocultural units.

Interdisciplinary Nature of Food Terminology

Counihan and Van Esterik (2013) argue that food-related studies require interdisciplinary approaches due to their connections with history, geography, race, class, gender, globalization, social justice, and human rights. Similarly, Uzbek scholar Q. Rasulov asserts that food terms and phrases represent national mentality and form a favorable field for linguocultural semantic analysis. These aspects illustrate that food terminology intersects not only with linguistics but also with cultural studies, translation theory, and sociology. Therefore, the study of food-related expressions necessitates linguistic, linguocultural, and communicative approaches. These terminological units are deeply rooted in the worldview, values, and traditions of the communities that use them.

Cultural Embeddedness and Translation Challenges

The formation of food terminology is closely tied to culture. It is shaped by a nation's historical lifestyle, worldview, religious beliefs, climate, geographical location, and agricultural capacity. For instance, Uzbek terms like non, sho'rva, osh, qazi, and sumalak represent not only specific foods but also social values, religious symbols, and ceremonial meanings. Similarly, English terms like turkey, pudding, cheddar, and roast beef express different national values. Phrases such as Thanksgiving turkey reflect specific historical events in American cultural memory and pose challenges in translation due to linguocultural differences.



Studies in linguocultural studies and translation have shown that the mistranslation of food terms can lead not only to lexical equivalence issues but also to problems of cultural and communicative compatibility. Therefore, food terminology must be studied as conceptual, semantic, and discursive categories. Cognitive linguistics, sociopragmatics, and linguocultural methodologies are essential tools in this field.

Structural Features and Modern Trends in Food Terminology

From a linguistic standpoint, structural aspects of food terms—such as morphology (affixation, compounding, abbreviation), syntax (phrase structure, attributive linkage), and semantics (metaphorical expansion, antonymy, synonymy)—are critical. For example, the English term junk food carries a negative metaphorical connotation. Its Uzbek equivalent *zararli ovqatlar* may convey a similar semantic meaning but lacks the full connotative nuance.

Another important point is that globalization and new media have rapidly influenced food terminology. Neologisms such as plant-based meat, vegan cheese, and superfood are emerging. These developments require analysis under new linguistic paradigms such as dynamic semantics, discourse linguistics, and linguosemiotics and further complicate the issue of translation equivalence.

Food as a Semiotic and Cultural System

The food system represents a complex semiotic sphere that reflects dominant social and cultural values in human life. As Montanari (2006) notes, people assess food not only through economic or biological factors but also based on symbolic (semantic) values. Thus, food plays a vital role in both personal and social identity. According to Kaplan (2012), the preference for one food over another is never accidental—it reflects religious beliefs, social stratification, ethnic traits, and gender roles. Cultural connotations of food appear in menu structures, eating rituals, daily food habits, and ceremonial customs.

Roland Barthes (1961/2013) considered food an integral part of the semiotic system—not just a collection of products, but a meaningful structure where every component interacts with the whole. Thus, food items serve as linguistic and



communicative units, carriers of cultural semantics. Their communicative value is expressed through appearance, preparation methods, sensory perception (smell, taste, appearance), and contextual settings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the theoretical study of food terminology shows that this field requires a multidisciplinary approach, integrating insights from linguistics, cultural studies, sociology, psycholinguistics, and translation studies. A thorough analysis of food terms in English and Uzbek reveals their deep connection to national spirituality, worldview, and communicative culture. Such research contributes to the development of new terminological models that express the integration of language and culture.