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LINGUOCULTUROLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON FOOD VOCABULARY IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the linguocultural dimensions of food-related vocabulary in Uzbek and English literature, emphasizing its role as a cultural marker that reflects societal values, traditions, and identity. By examining Abdulla Qodiriy’s “O‘tkan Kunlar” (Bygone Days) and “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens, the paper analyzes how food symbolism functions within these texts to convey deeper cultural meanings. In Uzbek literature, food often represents hospitality, familial bonds, and social harmony, as seen in Qodiriy’s depiction of traditional dishes such as *varaqi*, which signifies respect and community values. Conversely, in English literature, food frequently symbolizes class distinctions, moral lessons, and social critique, exemplified by Dickens’ portrayal of the Cratchit family’s modest Christmas meal, which underscores themes of generosity, resilience, and the socio-economic disparities of Victorian England.

KEYWORDS: linguoculturology, food vocabulary, cultural symbolism

O‘ZBEK VA INGLIZ ADABIYOTIDA OZIQ-OVQAT LEKSIKASINING LINGVOKULTUROLOGIK JIHATLARI

ANNOTATSIYA: Ushbu tadqiqot o‘zbek va ingliz adabiyotidagi oziq-ovqat bilan bog‘liq leksikaning lingvokultural o‘lchamlarini o‘rganib, uning jamiyat qadriyatlari, an‘analari va o‘zligini aks ettiruvchi madaniy belgi sifatidagi rolini ta’kidlaydi. Abdulla Qodiriyning “O‘tkan kunlar” hamda Charlz Dikkensning “Rojdestvo taronasi” asarlarini tahlil qilish orqali maqolada oziq-ovqat ramzlari ushbu matnlarda chuqur madaniy ma’nolarni qanday ifodalashi o‘rganiladi.

O‘zbek adabiyotida taom mehmondo‘stlik, oilaviy rishtalar va ijtimoiy hamjihatlik timsoli sifatida namoyon bo‘lib, Qodiriyning varaqi kabi an‘anaviy taomlarni tasvirlashida hurmat va jamoaviy qadriyatlarni ifodalashi kuzatiladi. Aksincha, ingliz adabiyotida oziq-ovqat ko‘pincha

sinf farqlari, axloqiy saboqlar va ijtimoiy tanqid timsoli sifatida namoyon bo‘lib, Dikkensning Kratchitlar oilasining kamtarona Rojdestvo taomi tasviri orqali saxiylik, matonat hamda Viktoriya davri Angliyasidagi ijtimoiy-iqtisodiy tafovutlarni yoritadi.

KALIT SO'ZLAR: lingvokulturologiya, oziq-ovqat leksikasi, madaniy ramziylik

ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ ПИЩЕВОЙ ЛЕКСИКИ В УЗБЕКСКОЙ И АНГЛИЙСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ

АННОТАЦИЯ: В данном исследовании рассматриваются лингвокультурные аспекты лексики, связанной с пищей, в узбекской и английской литературе, подчеркивая ее роль в качестве культурного маркера, отражающего общественные ценности, традиции и идентичность. Анализируя произведения Абдуллы Кадыри «Прошедшие дни» и «Рождественская песнь» Чарльза Диккенса, статья исследует, как символика еды используется в этих текстах для передачи более глубоких культурных смыслов. В узбекской литературе еда часто символизирует гостеприимство, семейные узы и социальную гармонию, что проявляется в описании Кадыри традиционных блюд, таких как вараки, символизирующих уважение и коллективные ценности. Напротив, в английской литературе пища зачастую служит символом классовых различий, моральных уроков и социальной критики, что видно на примере скромного рождественского ужина семьи Крэтчитов у Диккенса, подчеркивающего темы щедрости, стойкости и социально-экономического неравенства викторианской Англии.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: лингвокультурология, пищевая лексика, культурная символика

INTRODUCTION. Linguoculturology, an interdisciplinary field that bridges linguistics and cultural studies, investigates the complex relationship between language and culture. It explores how language not only reflects but also shapes a society's values, norms, and worldviews. This perspective considers language as more than a tool for communication—it is a cultural artifact that encapsulates a community's collective identity. By analyzing linguistic elements, linguoculturology offers insights into the ways in which cultural concepts are embedded within language, revealing societal beliefs, social practices, and historical experiences (Wierzbicka, 1997; Stepanov, 2015).

One of the most striking examples of this cultural embedding is food vocabulary. Food, as both a basic human necessity and a symbol of cultural practices, holds a profound role in shaping social relationships, rituals, and cultural identity. In literature, food transcends its material function and serves as a powerful symbol that reflects cultural norms, societal values, and social hierarchies. Through food-related terms, metaphors, and idiomatic expressions, authors convey meanings that extend beyond sustenance, offering insights into the cultural fabric of the societies they depict.

In the context of literature, food-related vocabulary is not just a representation of culinary practices but also a reflection of the socio-cultural contexts in which these works were produced. For example, while Uzbek literature often associates food with hospitality, familial bonds, and traditional rituals, English literature uses food to explore themes of scarcity, indulgence, and class distinctions. Thus, food terms in these languages serve as cultural markers, providing a rich source for analyzing how different societies perceive the relationship between language, food, and culture.

This article seeks to explore the symbolic role of food in literature by focusing on how food-related vocabulary reflects and reinforces cultural values in both Uzbek and English literary traditions. Specifically, it will examine the works of Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan Kunlar* (Bygone Days) and Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. These works were chosen for their rich use of food imagery, which serves to convey deeper cultural meanings and societal concerns within their respective contexts. Through a comparative analysis of these literary examples, this study aims to uncover how food symbolism functions within these texts to express concepts such as hospitality, familial bonds, social class, and identity.

In Uzbek literature, food often symbolizes community and familial ties, particularly through the lens of hospitality and social practice. In *O'tkan Kunlar*, food is depicted as an integral part of social rituals, highlighting the importance of social gatherings and the cultural expectation of honoring guests. Qodiriy's portrayal of traditional dishes, such as the preparation of meals for esteemed guests, underscores the value placed on hospitality and maintaining social harmony within family and community structures.

Similarly, in English literature, food frequently serves as a symbol of class distinctions, generosity, and social inequality. Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* offers a vivid example where the modest Christmas meal of the Cratchit family becomes a symbol of familial love and resilience despite their economic hardship. Through this depiction, Dickens critiques the class disparities of Victorian society and uses food as a moral symbol of warmth and togetherness over material wealth.

Through the comparative analysis of these two literary works, this article aims to illustrate how food-related vocabulary and symbolism serve as cultural markers, reflecting the distinct socio-cultural values of Uzbek and English societies. This study not only contributes to the understanding of how food functions as both a material necessity and a cultural artifact but also emphasizes the role of food in constructing and communicating cultural identities in literature. By examining food symbolism in these works, we gain a deeper understanding of the intersection between language, culture, and societal values, contributing to the broader field of linguocultural studies.

METHODOLOGY: This study employs a qualitative comparative analysis to explore the symbolic use of food-related vocabulary in the literary works of Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan Kunlar* (Bygone Days) and Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. The methodological approach

involves two main components: textual analysis and the application of a linguocultural framework.

Textual Analysis. The first phase of the methodology involves a detailed textual analysis of food-related vocabulary in both *O‘tkan Kunlar* and *A Christmas Carol*. This process includes identifying and cataloging food-related terms, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and the contexts in which they appear within the selected literary works. For Qodiriy’s *O‘tkan Kunlar*, the focus is on scenes in which food preparation, consumption, or symbolism is significant to the narrative and character development. The selected passages that highlight the preparation of specific dishes, such as *varaqi* (a traditional Uzbek dish), serve as focal points for understanding the cultural importance of food in Uzbek society. Similarly, for Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*, scenes that feature the Cratchit family’s modest Christmas meal are examined to explore how food functions as a symbol of family, class, and social disparity in Victorian England.

Each instance of food-related vocabulary is analyzed not only for its direct culinary meaning but also for its symbolic value within the cultural context of the text. For example, the *varaqi* in *O‘tkan Kunlar* is explored as a symbol of hospitality, familial honor, and social respect, while the Cratchits’ Christmas meal in *A Christmas Carol* is analyzed for its representation of familial love, resilience, and the moral superiority of simplicity over material wealth.

Linguocultural Framework. To interpret the findings, the study applies a linguocultural framework, which focuses on the interaction between language, culture, and society. This framework, drawn from the interdisciplinary field of linguoculturology, examines how cultural values, social practices, and societal structures are embedded within language. The research focuses on how food-related vocabulary in literature functions as a cultural marker, revealing insights into the social norms, traditions, and class dynamics of the societies depicted in the texts.

In particular, the study looks at how food symbolism reflects cultural identity and social values in both Uzbek and English contexts. It compares and contrasts the different roles that food plays in these two literary traditions—food as a marker of hospitality and social harmony in Uzbek literature versus food as a reflection of class, generosity, and social critique in English literature. The comparative approach highlights how food-related vocabulary serves as a vehicle for conveying societal ideologies and cultural distinctions in both literary traditions.

Comparative Analysis. The final methodological step is a comparative analysis of the findings from the two texts. By juxtaposing food symbolism in *O‘tkan Kunlar* and *A Christmas Carol*, the study aims to identify similarities and differences in the way food serves as a cultural symbol. Key themes such as hospitality, familial bonds, social class, and identity are examined through the lens of food symbolism, allowing for a deeper understanding of how these literary works communicate cultural values and social norms through culinary representations. The comparison also provides insights into how food functions differently in the social and cultural

contexts of Uzbek and English societies, contributing to a broader understanding of food as a cultural artifact in literature.

In summary, the methodology combines textual analysis and a linguocultural framework to examine the role of food symbolism in literature. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of how food-related vocabulary reflects and reinforces cultural values in both Uzbek and English literary traditions, contributing to the broader field of linguocultural studies.

RESULTS: Food as a Symbol in Literature. Food has long served as a powerful symbol in literature, reflecting cultural values, social structures, and interpersonal relationships. Both Uzbek and English literary traditions use food as a means of conveying themes such as community, hospitality, class distinctions, and personal identity. By examining food symbolism in these literatures, we can gain a deeper understanding of how food functions as both a practical necessity and a cultural artifact.

Food as a Symbol in Uzbek Literature

In Uzbek literature, food frequently symbolizes community, family bonds, and the traditional values of hospitality. An illustrative example can be found in Abdulla Qodiriy’s seminal novel *O‘tkan Kunlar* (*Bygone Days*), where food is intricately tied to social customs and interpersonal relationships.

One notable scene depicts the protagonist Mirzakarim Qutidor instructing Oftob Oyim to prepare a special dish for an esteemed guest:

".....uyingda mevalaring bor edimi? — Bor. — Bor bo‘lsa yaxshi. Bir ozdan so‘ng et olib kirguzarman, **varaqi** pishirib qo‘yingiz. Oftob oyim varaqi pishirishdan u kungi mehmonning uncha-muncha kishi bo‘lmag‘anlig‘ini bildi. — Qanaqa mehmon edi? — Sen tanimassan, toshkandlik bir yigit, tag‘i shu yerdagi uch-to‘rtta og‘aynilar. Tuzikmi, aytkanlarimni uqdingmi?"

The term *varaqi* refers to a traditional layered dish in Uzbek cuisine, prepared using a meticulous process involving the layering of dough, mincing of meat, and frying. Reserved for honored guests, the preparation of this labor-intensive dish underscores the guest's esteemed status and reflects the host's deep respect.

Within this narrative, *varaqi* transcends its culinary role to embody the cultural importance of hospitality, symbolizing the social expectation to honor guests and maintain a familial reputation. Through this lens, Qodiriy illustrates how food functions as a marker of respect, community bonds, and social cohesion in Uzbek society.

By embedding *varaqi* into the storyline, Qodiriy enriches his work's cultural texture and demonstrates the interplay between gastronomy, social hierarchies, and cultural identity, contributing to a broader understanding of linguocultural practices in literature.

Food as a Symbol in English Literature

In English literature, food frequently serves as a potent symbol, reflecting class distinctions, societal norms, and personal identity. Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* provides a notable example where the modest Christmas meal of the Cratchit family symbolizes

gratitude, love, and resilience in the face of poverty. Despite their limited financial resources, the Cratchits cherish their small goose, transforming it into a symbol of familial unity and the true spirit of Christmas. Linguoculturally, this representation underscores Victorian ideals of domestic warmth and the prioritization of moral values over material wealth.

Dickens describes the Cratchit family's meal in vivid detail: *"There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavour, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom of a bone upon the dish), they hadn't ate it all at last!"* (Dickens, 1843, p.55).

This description reflects not only the humble but cherished nature of their meal but also highlights their ability to find joy and gratitude despite their simplicity. The reference to "cheapness" exemplifies the Cratchit family's resourcefulness and resilience, turning a modest feast into a memorable occasion.

Additionally, Dickens captures the family's deep appreciation for the goose in the following passage: *"Such a bustle ensued that you might have thought a goose the rarest of all birds; a feathered phenomenon, to which a black swan was a matter of course—and in truth it was something very like it in that house"* (Dickens, 1843, p.54). This moment emphasizes their recognition of the meal as a rare treat, underscoring themes of gratitude and contentment despite economic hardship.

Through this depiction, Dickens not only illustrates the significance of food as a symbol of familial togetherness but also critiques the stark class inequalities of Victorian society. The Cratchits' modest celebration contrasts sharply with Scrooge's wealth, emphasizing the moral richness of the former over the material excess of the latter. This duality reflects the linguocultural dimensions of Victorian England, where food and its symbolism encapsulated broader societal values and tensions.

CONCLUSION. In both Uzbek and English literary traditions, food-related vocabulary serves as a powerful symbol that transcends its material function, reflecting and reinforcing the cultural values, social structures, and historical contexts of the societies depicted. Through the comparative analysis of Abdulla Qodiriy's *O'tkan Kunlar* and Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, this study has demonstrated how food symbolism acts as a vehicle for conveying themes such as hospitality, familial bonds, social class, and identity. In Uzbek literature, food often symbolizes community and the deep cultural expectations of hospitality, with dishes like *varaqi* playing a central role in expressing social respect and family unity. In contrast, English literature, particularly in Dickens' work, uses food as a symbol of class disparity, generosity, and moral values, where the Cratchit family's modest meal serves as a powerful critique of Victorian social inequality.

This exploration highlights the significance of food not only as a cultural artifact but also as a means of constructing and communicating cultural identities in literature. Food-related

terms and metaphors offer profound insights into societal beliefs and practices, allowing readers to better understand the intricate relationship between language, culture, and social structure. The comparative approach used in this study provides a deeper appreciation of how food symbolism varies across cultures, reflecting the unique socio-cultural dynamics of Uzbek and English societies.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader field of linguocultural studies by illustrating how food functions as both a practical necessity and a symbolic medium that reflects the values, traditions, and identity of a culture. The findings underscore the importance of food-related vocabulary in literature as a tool for understanding cultural ideologies and social norms, enriching our understanding of how language and culture intertwine to shape human experiences and identity.

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