

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MEAT DISH NAMES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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Abstract. *This article examines the lexical, cultural, and semantic characteristics of meat dish names in English and Uzbek languages. By drawing on comparative linguistic methodology, the study aims to explore how culinary terms reflect cultural identity, social norms, and linguistic structure in both contexts. The paper highlights both the functional naming strategies used in English and the culturally rich naming traditions in Uzbek, showing how food terminology offers a valuable window into cross-cultural understanding and linguistic worldviews.*

Keywords: *comparative linguistics, meat dishes, Uzbek cuisine, English cuisine, cultural semantics, culinary terminology, language and culture.*

Language serves not only as a tool of communication but also as a carrier of culture, tradition, and social practice. Among the various lexical domains that reflect national identity, food vocabulary—particularly dish names—occupies a prominent place. In this context, meat dishes are of particular interest due to their widespread presence in both English and Uzbek culinary cultures, though their linguistic expressions and cultural connotations differ significantly.

This study attempts a comparative linguistic and cultural analysis of meat dish names in English and Uzbek, offering insights into how language encodes culinary practice and how such practices mirror societal values.

In English, the naming of meat dishes is generally guided by clarity, simplicity, and direct description. For instance, names such as roast chicken, beef stew, grilled lamb, and pork chops indicate not only the type of meat but also the method of preparation. The semantic transparency of these names allows for ease of understanding, even across diverse English-speaking regions.

The influence of culinary globalization has also introduced international terms like kebab, teriyaki beef, or tandoori chicken, which are often adopted with minimal phonological change, demonstrating English' s adaptive lexical character.

In contrast, Uzbek meat dish names are heavily influenced by cultural traditions, social values, and historical context. Dishes like osh (plov), shashlik, manti, qozon kabob, and dimlama are not merely food items but cultural symbols deeply embedded in national identity and social customs. These names are often idiomatic and non-transparent to non-native speakers, as they do not explicitly describe ingredients or preparation techniques. Instead, the understanding of such terms requires cultural familiarity. For example, osh involves rice, carrots, lamb, and spices, but the name itself does not indicate any of these. Similarly, shashlik may include marinated lamb or beef cooked over open fire, but the term reflects a broader Central Asian grilling tradition rather than detailed culinary information.

The Uzbek language also preserves regional variations in dish names and preparation styles, often tied to local customs and festive occasions. In rural regions, meat dishes are prepared and consumed during weddings, religious holidays, and communal events, which adds a layer of symbolic and emotional significance to the names themselves. This contrasts with English-speaking cultures where individual meals, restaurant menus, and regional branding are more dominant in naming conventions. For example, terms like Shepherd' s pie or Cornish pasty reference specific geographic or occupational origins, reflecting a historical and often commercial influence on culinary naming practices.

Furthermore, both English and Uzbek have experienced lexical borrowing in the culinary domain, especially in recent decades. English has incorporated many non-native dish names as a result of cultural diversity and globalization.

Uzbek, likewise, has borrowed terms like *stek* (from English “steak”), *kotlet* (from Russian), and *burger* (direct borrowing from English), which are now commonly used in everyday speech, particularly among younger generations and in urban settings. These borrowed terms are often localized in pronunciation and sometimes adapted in preparation style to suit Uzbek tastes.

The study of meat dish names not only reveals linguistic strategies but also deeper cultural narratives. In English, names tend to focus on utility and clarity, reflecting an individualistic and commercial culinary culture. In Uzbek, however, names carry collective memory, heritage, and cultural pride. This suggests that the same lexical field—food—can operate very differently across languages, shaped by worldview, tradition, and social behavior.

As such, meat dish names serve as a lens through which we can explore the intersection of language, culture, and identity.

In conclusion, the comparative study of meat dish names in English and Uzbek languages demonstrates that food-related vocabulary is deeply intertwined with cultural values and linguistic structure. While English favors transparent, descriptive naming conventions, Uzbek relies on culturally embedded, often symbolic terminology. This difference highlights the importance of sociolinguistic context in interpreting culinary terms and underscores the need for cross-cultural sensitivity in translation and intercultural communication. Future research may expand this analysis by including other domains of food vocabulary, such as desserts or beverages, to further explore how language reflects culinary heritage across cultures.

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