The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations
ISSN 2689-100X Volume 08 - 2026

Possibilities for The Comparative Linguocultural Study of Phraseological Units and Proverbs Containing Culinary Components

Talipova Shaxnoza Shuxratovna
Tashkent State Medical University, Uzbekistan

Received: 31 August 2026 | Received Revised Version: 22 September 2026 | Accepted: 05 October 2026 | Published: 31 October 2026

Volume 08 Issue 10 2026 | Crossref DOI: 10.37547/tajssei/Volume08Issue10-08

Abstract

This article examines the possibilities of studying phraseological units and proverbs containing culinary components from a comparative linguocultural perspective, drawing on materials from Uzbek, English, and Russian. The relevance of the research lies in the fact that food-related concepts, including bread, salt, tea, pilaf, meat, and other culinary elements, are closely associated with people's everyday lives while also reflecting their cultural values, social relationships, moral norms, and historical experiences.The study employs comparative analysis, componential analysis, linguocultural interpretation, and contextual analysis to identify the semantic, figurative-motivational, national-cultural, and pragmatic characteristics of phraseological units. Uzbek expressions such as "tuz-nonini yemoq" and "qozonga yaqin yursang, qorasi yuqadi" are compared with English expressions such as "bread and butter," "too many cooks spoil the broth," and "spill the beans," as well as Russian expressions such as "не хлебом единым жив человек" and "кашу маслом не испортишь."The findings make it possible to distinguish universal and culture-specific semantic layers of culinary components, determine degrees of translation equivalence, and identify cultural codes embedded in language. The study also highlights the role of proverbs and phraseological units in preserving national worldviews, transmitting cultural knowledge across generations, and facilitating intercultural communication.

Keywords: Culinary component, phraseological unit, proverb, linguoculturology, comparative analysis, cultural code, metaphor, translation.

© 2026 Talipova Shaxnoza Shuxratovna. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0). The authors retain copyright and allow others to share, adapt, or redistribute the work with proper attribution.

Cite This Article: Talipova Shaxnoza Shuxratovna. (2026). Possibilities for The Comparative Linguocultural Study of Phraseological Units and Proverbs Containing Culinary Components. The American Journal of Social Science and Education Innovations, 8(10), 74–79. https://doi.org/10.37547/tajssei/Volume08Issue10-08

1. Introduction

The phraseological and paremiological layers of language constitute an important source of information that preserves, in a concise form, the historical experience, everyday lifestyle, and ways of perceiving the world characteristic of a particular people. Food-related expressions, in particular, have developed into highly productive figurative devices in many languages because they are associated with one of humanity's oldest and most fundamental needs.

Lexical units such as bread, salt, tea, pilaf, meat, milk, butter, honey, dough, and cooking pots may function not merely as names of physical objects but also as cultural symbols expressing hospitality, prosperity, sustenance, labour, intimacy, solidarity, excess, experience, and social relationships. From this perspective, the study of phraseological units and proverbs containing culinary components extends beyond lexical and phraseological meanings and provides insight into the relationship between language and culture.

When describing the meanings of phraseological units, it is insufficient to interpret their constituent components merely as the sum of their individual lexical meanings. Such units are often conventional, stable expressions used figuratively and perform particular pragmatic functions in speech. Phraseology has developed as an independent theoretical and practical field of linguistic research, within which the semantic, structural, stylistic, and lexical characteristics of fixed expressions are examined (Cowie, 1998). At the same time, their cultural content represents an important factor distinguishing phraseological units from ordinary lexical items (Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen, 2006).

In Uzbek linguistics, Sh. Rahmatullayev's explanatory phraseological dictionary is considered one of the significant sources for the systematic description of phraseological material (Rahmatullayev, 1978).

Uzbek folk proverbs, in turn, are regarded as a folklore genre reflecting the people's centuries-old life experience and everyday practices (Mirzayev, Musoqulov, & Sarimsoqov, 2005). Therefore, examining phraseological and paremiological sources together provides a sound methodological basis for comparing culinary-component expressions.

The aim of this study is to identify the common and culture-specific characteristics of phraseological units and proverbs containing culinary components in Uzbek, English, and Russian from a comparative linguocultural perspective, with particular attention to their figurative foundations, cultural semantics, and degrees of translation equivalence.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives have been established:

To identify the theoretical foundations of expressions containing culinary components;

To classify these expressions into semantic and thematic groups;

To compare similar and different figurative patterns across the three languages;

To describe their national-cultural connotations;

To identify cases of full, partial, and zero equivalence in translation;

To substantiate the significance of these expressions in intercultural communication.

2. Literature Review

The study of phraseology as a linguistic layer that expresses cultural experience represents one of the widely established approaches in contemporary linguistics. Research edited by A. P. Cowie examines phraseology in terms of the nature of fixed and conventional expressions, their role in speech and lexicography, and their relationship with cultural elements (Cowie, 1998). This approach makes it possible to analyse culinary expressions not simply as grammatical patterns but as stable linguistic units that preserve social experience.

D. Dobrovol'skij and E. Piirainen emphasise the importance of cultural knowledge in understanding the meanings of phraseological units. According to their approach, the figurative meanings of idioms cannot be fully explained through conceptual metaphors alone; culture-specific knowledge must also be taken into account (Dobrovol'skij & Piirainen, 2006). This theoretical perspective is particularly important for explaining why particular culinary concepts acquire specific social or moral meanings.

A. Wierzbicka demonstrates the potential of key words and key concepts in comparative linguistic and cultural research. Within her approach, lexical units are regarded as semantic indicators that reveal the fundamental values of a culture (Wierzbicka, 1997). Since culinary concepts may become central cultural notions in certain societies, their comparative analysis can help identify people's perceptions of food culture, hospitality, labour, and prosperity.

V. N. Teliya has extensively examined the denotative and connotative meanings of phraseological units, their figurative nature, evaluative functions, and relationship with national-cultural connotations. The cultural characteristics of phraseological units make them important objects of linguocultural research (Teliya, 1996). Z. Kövecses's cognitive-metaphorical approach, in turn, is useful for explaining how concrete domains of human experience are transferred to abstract concepts (Kövecses, 2000).

With regard to Uzbek linguistic material, Rahmatullayev's phraseological dictionary and the collection Uzbek Folk Proverbs, compiled by Mirzayev, Musoqulov, and Sarimsoqov, serve as fundamental sources (Rahmatullayev, 1978; Mirzayev et al., 2005). Cowie (1998), together with studies comparing food-

related expressions in English and Uzbek, including Tagayeva (2023), provides a basis for describing English phraseological material. These sources contribute to establishing the comparative criteria applied in the present study.

3. Methodology

The research material consists of phraseological units and proverbs in Uzbek, English, and Russian that contain components referring to food products, dishes, kitchen utensils, or cooking processes.

In this study, the term culinary component is used as a general designation for nominative units referring to food, dishes, beverages, kitchen utensils, or cooking activities. Examples include non (bread), tuz (salt), osh (pilaf), choy (tea), asal (honey), xamir (dough), qozon (cooking pot), sariyog‘ (butter), go‘sht (meat), as well as bread, salt, tea, soup, butter, beans, and cake.

Four principal methods are employed in the analysis.

The first is the comparative method, which identifies common and distinctive semantic features of expressions in the three languages.

The second is componential analysis, which reveals the differences between the direct lexical meaning of a culinary component and its function within a phraseological meaning.

The third is linguocultural interpretation, which explains the customs, values, lifestyle patterns, and historical experiences underlying particular expressions.

The fourth is contextual analysis, which identifies the pragmatic functions and evaluative meanings of these expressions in actual speech contexts.

This comprehensive approach makes it possible to examine phraseological meaning beyond its dictionary definition (Dobrovol’skij & Piirainen, 2006; Teliya, 1996).

The analysis takes into account three degrees of equivalence:

Full or near equivalence – the image and meaning are almost identical in two or more languages.

Partial equivalence – the general meaning is preserved, but the figurative image or constituent components differ.

Zero equivalence – no established phraseological equivalent exists in another language, and the meaning must be conveyed through explanation, description, or a functional analogue.

These criteria are particularly important for examining translation and intercultural communication.

4. Results and Discussion of the Findings

The research findings demonstrate that culinary components form several major conceptual groups within phraseological and paremiological expressions.

1. The Concept of “Sustenance and Life”

In Uzbek culture, bread and salt possess a special symbolic status. In the expression “tuz-nonini yemoq” (literally, “to eat someone’s salt and bread”), the dominant meaning is not the physical nature of food but the relationship of closeness, gratitude, and mutual connection established through sharing a meal.Here, the component non (bread) develops beyond its ordinary meaning as a daily food product and becomes a symbol of cultural memory and social relationships (Rahmatullayev, 1978).

2. The Concept of “Labour and Livelihood”

The English expression “bread and butter” may refer to the income necessary for everyday life or a person’s primary means of livelihood. In this expression, bread and butter function not simply as food products but as prototypes of everyday necessities.This phenomenon can be interpreted from the perspective of key concepts and cultural semantics discussed by Wierzbicka (1997), whereby a concrete object becomes a semantic centre representing an abstract social meaning.

3. The Concept of “Social Relationships and Closeness”

In Uzbek expressions such as “tuz-nonini yemoq,” sharing food represents a cultural phenomenon that establishes and reinforces relationships between people.In the Russian expression “не хлебом единым жив человек” (“Man shall not live by bread alone”), bread functions as an image representing the material dimension of human existence, while simultaneously emphasising that human beings also have spiritual needs.Thus, the same culinary component may activate similar but not entirely identical conceptual meanings in different languages (Teliya, 1996).

4. The Concept of “Collective Activity and Outcomes”

In the English proverb “too many cooks spoil the broth,”

the components cooks and broth are used to represent a situation in which collective activity lacks coordination.

The process of preparing food is transferred to the model of social cooperation: excessive interference in a task may lead to an undesirable result. From the perspective of cognitive metaphor theory, this demonstrates how a concrete domain of experience serves to explain an abstract social situation (Kövecses, 2000).

5. The Concept of "Secrets, Information, and Disclosure"

In the English expression "spill the beans," the spilling of beans is not interpreted literally but figuratively, meaning to reveal confidential information.The physical property of a culinary object – something contained in a vessel becoming exposed – is reinterpreted as a figurative model of a communicative act.This semantic transfer demonstrates that phraseological units possess considerably broader cultural and pragmatic potential than ordinary object names (Cowie, 1998).

6. The Concept of "Abundance and Excess"

In the Russian expression "кашу маслом не испортишь" ("You cannot spoil porridge with butter"), the addition of butter to food is evaluated positively, even when it is used in considerable quantities.The cultural meaning of this expression can be generalised as the idea that an abundance of something good is not harmful.At the same time, an identical figurative model may not exist in Uzbek. In translation, another expression with a similar meaning and pragmatic function may therefore be selected. This represents a typical case of partial equivalence.

Comparative Summary of the Findings Language Expression Culinary component Main meaning Linguocultural orientation

Uzbek tuz-nonini yemoq Salt, bread Closeness, gratitude Shared meals and social relationships

Uzbek qozonga yaqin yursang, qorasi yuqadi Cooking pot Influence of one's environment From everyday experience to social conclusions

English bread and butter Bread, butter Livelihood, primary income Everyday needs and prosperity

English too many cooks spoil the broth Cooks, broth Excessive interference Cooperation and management

English spill the beans Beans Revealing a secret From a physical action to a communicative meaning

Russian не хлебом единым жив человек Bread Material and spiritual needs Bread as a symbol of human existence

Russian кашу маслом не испортишь Porridge, butter Abundance Evaluation through food composition

As the table demonstrates, the same object or food name may activate different cultural concepts in different languages. For example, bread in Uzbek and Russian has a broad associative field connected with life, sustenance, and material needs, whereas the English expression "bread and butter" primarily refers to everyday livelihood and a principal source of income.

Nevertheless, certain common features can also be identified: in all three languages, food-related components are actively used figuratively to express fundamental human needs and social experience.

In Uzbek linguistic material, the components osh (pilaf) and qozon (cooking pot) also possess particular linguocultural potential.

Pilaf represents not merely a dish but also activates concepts associated with ceremonies, hospitality, and communal life. The cooking pot, in turn, is one of the central objects of household life, communal meals, and everyday domestic practices, and therefore appears in numerous figurative expressions.

When analysing such expressions, it is necessary to consider not only their lexical meanings but also the historical and everyday experiences of the people (Mirzayev et al., 2005).

Another important characteristic of phraseological units is their evaluative function. Through culinary components, various oppositions may be expressed, including good and bad, much and little, permissible and impermissible, familiar and unfamiliar, useful and harmful.

Teliya (1996) draws particular attention to the evaluative and national-cultural connotations of phraseological units. From this perspective, culinary expressions may preserve linguistic representations of everyday moral questions such as "How should one live?", "What constitutes an appropriate relationship?", and "What should be valued?"

From the perspective of translation, phraseological units containing culinary components present particular difficulties.When a full equivalent is unavailable, literal

translation often results in the loss of the original figurative or cultural meaning.

For example, translating “spill the beans” literally as “to spill beans” does not convey its idiomatic meaning. A functional equivalent appropriate to the communicative purpose or an explanatory translation is required.

Conversely, when proverbs and expressions have similar meanings, a translator may use a culturally familiar image from the target language.

Thus, three levels must be considered separately in the translation process: the literal meaning of the object, the phraseological meaning, and the cultural connotation (Wierzbicka, 1997; Dobrovol’skij & Piirainen, 2006).

One of the practical applications of comparative linguocultural analysis is the use of phraseological units in foreign language teaching.

When students learn expressions such as “bread and butter,” “spill the beans,” or “too many cooks spoil the broth,” they acquire not only new vocabulary but also figurative patterns of thinking characteristic of English.

Comparing these expressions with Uzbek examples such as “tuz-nonini yemoq” makes it possible to identify similarities and differences between cultural experiences reflected in the native and foreign languages.

This approach contributes to the development of phraseological competence and intercultural communicative competence (Cowie, 1998).

5. Discussion

The research findings reveal the three-layered nature of culinary components: the nominative, phraseological, and linguocultural layers.At the nominative level, a culinary component refers to a particular object or process. At the phraseological level, it acquires a figurative, stable, and often idiomatic meaning. At the linguocultural level, it becomes associated with the historical memory, everyday experience, values, and evaluative criteria of a particular community.Therefore, classifying expressions containing culinary components merely as food-related idioms does not fully reveal their cultural content (Tagayeva, 2023).

The comparative material demonstrates that universal and culture-specific characteristics may coexist within a single expression.

Although eating is a universal human activity shared by all societies, the symbolic status of particular dishes, the products associated with prosperity, and the social meanings attributed to sharing food vary across cultures.

For this reason, the principle of “the same component means the same thing” cannot be applied in linguocultural comparison. Instead, the role of a particular component within its cultural scenario must be identified (Wierzbicka, 1997).This approach is equally important for paremiological material. The principal characteristic of a proverb lies in its generalising and didactic meaning.

A culinary image often transforms an observation about everyday life into a concise conclusion. For example, the coordination and moderation required in food preparation may be transferred to the concepts of order and cooperation in social activities.

From this perspective, the culinary component of a proverb may be regarded as the source domain, while its generalised moral or social conclusion represents the target domain.

Such a cognitive model can be explained through the general mechanisms of metaphorical mapping (Kövecses, 2000).

Future research would benefit from examining culinary components alongside national cuisine terminology, traditional ceremonies, ethnographic data, and corpus-based materials.

In particular, investigating the frequency of Uzbek expressions containing non (bread), osh (pilaf), choy (tea), tuz (salt), and qozon (cooking pot) across different genres and discourse types may provide valuable findings.

Further research could also involve corpus-based comparisons with parallel expressions in English and Russian, as well as an examination of how such expressions are rendered in translation practice. This research direction lies at the intersection of linguoculturology, phraseology, paremiology, translation studies, and foreign language teaching methodology.

6. Conclusion

The comparative linguocultural study of phraseological units and proverbs containing culinary components represents an effective research direction for identifying the cultural experience underlying linguistic expressions.

Components associated with food and cooking frequently undergo semantic shifts from their original meanings related to basic human needs to abstract social, moral, and communicative meanings in different languages.

The comparison of Uzbek, English, and Russian linguistic materials has revealed the existence of common concepts such as sustenance, livelihood, closeness, labour, cooperation, disclosure of secrets, and abundance, alongside national differences in their figurative representation.

The study demonstrates that the linguocultural value of culinary components is determined by three principal factors: their direct connection with people's everyday lives, their potential to develop figurative meanings, and their capacity to preserve historical and cultural experience.

Consequently, translating such expressions requires consideration not only of lexical correspondence but also of figurative imagery, pragmatic function, and cultural connotation.

The findings of comparative analysis have practical significance for compiling phraseological dictionaries, translation practice, foreign language teaching, and intercultural communication.

Overall, the study of phraseological units and proverbs containing culinary components reveals the potential of language as a form of cultural memory.

Such expressions reflect not merely what people have eaten but also what they have valued, how they have evaluated relationships between individuals, and how they have generalised their everyday experiences.

Therefore, culinary phraseology and paremiology constitute important sources for identifying the verbal manifestations of national worldviews.

References

1. Cowie, A. P. (Ed.). (1998). Phraseology: Theory, analysis, and applications. Oxford University Press.
2. Dobrovol'skij, D., & Piirainen, E. (2006). Cultural knowledge and idioms. International Journal of English Studies, 6(1), 27–42.
3. Kövecses, Z. (2000). Metaphor and emotion: Language, culture, and body in human feeling. Cambridge University Press.
4. Mirzayev, T., Musoqulov, A., & Sarimsoqov, B. (2005). O'zbek xalq maqollari. Sharq.
5. Rahmatullayev, Sh. (1978). O'zbek tilining izohli frazeologik lug'ati. O'qituvchi.
6. 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.
7. Teliya, V. N. (1996). Русская фразеология. Семантический, прагматический и лингвокультурологический аспекты. Языки русской культуры.
8. Wierzbicka, A. (1997). Understanding cultures through their key words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese. Oxford University Press.